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FIRST HISTORY OF FRANCE



MEETING OF HENRY VIII. OF ENGLAND AND FRANCIS I.

A FIRST HISTORY
OF
FRANCE

BY
LOUISE CREIGHTON

AUTHOR OF 'A FIRST HISTORY OF ENGLAND,' 'STORIES FROM
ENGLISH HISTORY,' ETC. ETC.

With Illustrations and Maps

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INTRODUCTION

BEFORE we begin to study the history of France, let us look at its position on the map of Europe. It belongs both to the south and to the north ; for it has sea-ports on the Mediterranean as well as on the English Channel and on the Bay of Biscay. On the south and west and part of the north, France has what are called natural boundaries, the sea and the great mountain chain of the Pyrenees ; but on the east and part of the north there are no boundaries clearly marked by nature ; and on this side France has often tried to grow bigger, so that sometimes it has been bigger, and sometimes smaller than it is at present.

Like England, France has a climate which is neither too hot nor too cold, but it has more sunshine and less damp and fog than that island. In the south, vines and olives grow, and the wines of France are the best in the world. Its wealth, its position, and the character of its people have made France play a great part in the history of Europe ; and it will help you to understand the history of England better to know something of the history of the French, her nearest neighbours.

CHAPTER I

ROMAN GAUL

WHEN first we hear anything about France, it is described as covered with marshes and dense forests inhabited by wild beasts. The people lived in caves, and made arms and tools out of bones and flints. Of these people we know little, and the first inhabitants of the land about whom history teaches us anything are the Gauls. They came from the far East, and gave the name of Gaul to the land which we call France.

The Gauls belonged, like the Irish, the Welsh, and the Highlanders, to the great family of the Celts. They were tall, with fair skin, fair hair, and blue eyes. They were terrible in the battle-field, but were easily cast down by misfortunes, though quick to hope again. A Gaul thought it beneath him to plough and till the fields, though he would hunt and tend cattle. They were lively people, and liked to sing and feast and recite poetry. Their land was rich in mines, and they were clever in working in copper and gold, and eager to trade with other people. They made roads and bridges, and plied the rivers in leather skiffs. They carried on much trade with Britain, and sailed the Channel in clumsy ships with leather sails.

The Gauls prayed to the spirits in the thunder, the

sun, the mountains and rivers. They had no temples, but their priests, the Druids, made altars in the deep forests, where sometimes living men were offered as sacrifices. These Druids were judges and doctors as well as priests; they were set apart from the rest of the people, and were greatly honoured. They wrote no books, but the young disciples learnt from the lips of the old men, the wisdom that had come to them from their fathers.

Cæsar conquers Gaul, B.C. 58.—About 150 B.C. the Romans came over the Alps and settled in the south of Gaul. They found the land pleasant and fertile, and after a while built cities there, and called this Roman colony *the Province*; and to this day that part of France keeps the name Provence. When the great Roman, Julius Cæsar, wished to make himself the chief man in Rome, he determined to win fame by conquering the whole of Gaul. He has written the story of his conquest himself, and his book tells us much about the manners and customs of the Gauls.

Vercingetorix.—Many of the bravest Gauls gathered round a great chief Vercingetorix, to fight against the Romans. He told them to burn their corn, so that the Romans might find nothing to eat, to break down the bridges and burn the villages, so that they might find no place to shelter in. At first he was able to make even Julius Cæsar retreat before him; but soon he had to retire to a place called Alesia. Then Cæsar made ditches full of water, and built little forts all round Alesia. But some of Vercingetorix's men got out, and went all through Gaul, and gathered a great host to attack Cæsar's camp. There were many more Gauls than Romans, and they were very brave, but

they had not been trained like the Roman soldiers. Several times they attacked Cæsar's camp in vain, until at last he turned upon them, and they fled in terror. Then Vercingetorix knew that all was lost ; but in the hope of saving his friends, he rode out on his battle-horse, clad in his richest armour, and throwing his sword at Cæsar's feet, gave himself up a prisoner. He was taken to Rome, and when Cæsar celebrated his conquest, the great Gaul was dragged behind his car in triumph.

Gaul becomes a Roman Province.—After this, few of the Gauls dared to fight against Cæsar. He was not harsh to them, for he wished to make them like the Roman rule. He admired the brave Gauls, and took them to fight in his armies.

For about 500 years Gaul was a Roman province. The Gauls learnt a great deal from the Romans. They came in time to speak their language and to use their laws. Splendid roads were made all over the land, and many walled cities, with fine temples and market-places, were built. The fairest cities and the most beautiful villas were in the south of Gaul ; and there we can still see the ruins of many of the great Roman buildings. Paris was then only a little village on an island in the Seine, called Lutetia. But even then Julian, one of the Roman emperors, was very fond of it. He describes it in a book which he wrote, and says that two wooden bridges go from the island to the banks of the river, and that the climate is mild, so that figs and grapes can be grown.

Gaul becomes Christian.—The Romans had killed the Druids and built temples of their own in Gaul. But about 170 A.D. Christian teachers came there.

The chief of these was Plotinus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, the holy Bishop of Smyrna, who in his youth had seen St. John himself. Plotinus settled at Lyons and taught the people there, and many became Christians. But one day the heathens at Lyons rose against the Christians, and dragged Plotinus, an old man of ninety, before the Roman governor. The governor asked him who was the God of the Christians. 'If you are worthy,' answered Plotinus, 'you will know.' Then those who stood by began to kick him and strike him with their fists, while those at a distance threw stones at him. He was carried back to prison half-dead, and soon after died in his cell. Forty-seven other Christians were put to death at the same time. Amongst them was a girl called Blandina. At first she was tortured in prison, but though the cruel men went on all day till they were tired themselves, she would say nothing against Christ, but only answered, 'I am a Christian.' Again and again, on following days, they beat her with rods and burnt her with hot irons, but they could not make her deny Christ. Then they led her into the amphitheatre, an open-air theatre, with seats all round filled with people looking on. Here she was given up to the fury of wild beasts. Bound, with arms stretched out in the shape of a cross, she lay and prayed, and the beasts would not touch her. A second time she was brought into the amphitheatre and thrown before a wild bull. He tossed her on his horns, and when that did not kill her, a knife was plunged into her throat.

For a moment it seemed as if there was an end of the church of Lyons. But the Church is watered by the blood of its martyrs. St. Irenæus, who is called the

light of the West, gathered together the scattered Christians. Seven new bishops were sent from Rome to carry the gospel all over Gaul. One of these, St. Dionysius, went as far as Lutetia or Paris. There he was beheaded on the hill of Montmartre, and buried by the care of a pious woman. A church was built over his body, and pilgrims came from all parts and made rich offerings at his tomb. In after days, under the name of St. Denis, he became the patron saint of France. After the year 312 the Church had rest, for then the Roman Emperor himself became a Christian.

St. Martin of Tours, 310-390.—One of the most famous Christian teachers was St. Martin. He came from a land far away by the Danube. When he was only ten, he ran away from home to become a hermit. But he was taken and forced to be a soldier in the Roman army. He was not yet a Christian, but was preparing for baptism, when, passing out of Amiens one day, he saw by the gate a naked, shivering beggar. He felt in his purse and found it empty, so he took his sword, and cutting his cloak in half, gave half to the beggar. That night Christ appeared to him in a dream, clothed in half a cloak, and said to the angels who stood round him, ‘Martin, still a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment.’ Martin took this as a sign, and immediately asked to be baptized, and became a Christian at the age of eighteen.

On leaving the army he spent some time in study in Italy, and then came to Gaul. There, as he loved to be quiet, he settled in the country near Tours, and founded the first monastery in Gaul, where other monks lived with him in prayer and the service of God. As time went on, much against his will he was made Bishop of

Tours. As bishop, he laboured without ceasing to carry the gospel to the poor, ignorant peasants of the country. He spent his days walking from place to place, followed by his disciples, and wherever he went he taught the people, so that he was called the Apostle of the country.

The Fall of Rome.—Whilst Christianity was growing stronger in Gaul the power of the Romans was growing weaker. On the other side of the Rhine, in the land which we now call Germany, there were many warlike, heathen tribes, whom the Romans had never conquered. These men longed for the riches and the fertile lands of the Roman empire. The Roman soldiers who used to guard the border lands so well, had grown fond of comfort and of an easy life. The barbarians were able to force their way into the provinces of the empire. The Gauls, who had so long been ruled by the Romans, had lost their old courage, and could not keep back the barbarians. In the beginning of the fifth century, fierce tribes, called the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Visigoths, came into Gaul to plunder. They were pleased with the fertile lands, and settled down in them, sometimes killing the poor Gauls, sometimes making them their slaves. The Franks for the most part settled in the north and centre, the Burgundians in the east, and the Visigoths in the south, from whence they crossed the Pyrenees into Spain.

Attila, 450.—But soon after these first inroads there came a new scourge, a terror to the barbarians as well as to the Gauls. A wild people called the Huns had come from Asia into Europe. They were small and ugly, and passed their life on horseback, living on raw

meat and mares' milk. Their leader was called Attila, and men said he was the scourge of God, who had sent him to punish them for their sins. He said of himself that where his horse passed, the grass never grew again. In 450 he crossed the Rhine into Gaul, and destroyed and burnt one city after another. The people of Paris were so terrified, that they decided to desert their city. But a holy woman called Geneviève bade them have courage, and pray to God for help. At first they were angry, and would have stoned her, but at last they listened to her voice. Geneviève's prayers were answered, and the Huns did not come near Paris. She became in later days one of the patron saints of the city.

The Huns were stopped in the plains of Chalons by a great army of barbarians, Gauls, and Romans, whom Aetius, the Roman general, had gathered to fight against the man who was the foe of all. It was a terrible battle, and 160,000 men lay dead or wounded amidst rivers of blood; but for the first time Attila was beaten. The victory was due to the Franks under their king Merovée, and the Visigoths under Theodoric, though Theodoric himself was killed.

Attila was like a beast at bay. On the morning after the battle the Huns stood behind a wall of chariots, blowing their trumpets and waving their swords. In the midst of the camp, Attila stood upon a great heap of horses' saddles, to which he meant to set fire, should the enemy get into the camp, so that none might have the glory of killing him. Aetius did not dare to attack him again; and Attila went back to Germany, and died two years afterwards.

CHAPTER II

GAUL BECOMES FRANCE

The Franks.—Attila left ruin behind him. The Roman rule in Gaul was at an end, and for many years the different German tribes struggled together who should have the chief power in the land. Amongst these tribes the chief were the Franks, who loved freedom like all the Germans. In times of peace all their warriors met together to decide the affairs of the nation, and when they went to war they chose a king to lead them. It was their habit to choose kings from the family of the Merovingians, who were distinguished by wearing their long hair floating over their shoulders.

Clovis, 481.—The greatest of the Merovingians was Clovis. He was only fifteen when the fierce Frankish warriors raised him, as their manner was, on a shield above their shoulders, and shouted that he should be their king. The Franks over whom Clovis ruled owned but little land in the country which is now called Belgium, round the city of Tournai. But as Clovis grew to be a man he decided to lead his brave warriors southwards to new conquests.

He won his first victory over a Roman general near Soissons, and after the battle the heathen Franks plundered a church that stood near, and took from it,

amongst other things, a vase of great size and beauty. There was at that time a saintly bishop at Rheims called Remigius. He sent a messenger to Clovis, and begged that the vase might be given back. Clovis, king though he was, did not feel that he had the right to give back the vase, but said that when the booty was divided, if the vase fell to his share, he would give it to Remigius. All the booty was gathered together at Soissons to be divided. There Clovis asked the chiefs to give him the silver vase over and above his share. All were willing but one man, who stepped forward and smote the vase heavily with his battle-axe, saying, 'You shall have nothing save what you carry away as your just share.' Clovis did not answer, but sent the vase back to Remigius. The next year the army was gathered together before Clovis, and as he passed along he stopped by the man who had broken the vase at Soissons. 'I have seen all the army,' he said, 'but no one has their arms in such bad order as you.' With that he dashed the man's sword to the ground. As the soldier bent to pick it up Clovis clove his head in two with his hatchet, saying, 'Thus did you smite the vase at Soissons.' This story shows that the dignity of king was so little thought of amongst the Franks that Clovis had shared the booty with his men as an equal. Yet his bravery gave him such power over these rude men, that none murmured when he slew one who had offended him.

Clovis married Clotilda, a Burgundian princess. She was a Christian, and it was her great wish to convert Clovis, but he refused to leave his heathen gods. One day he was engaged in a battle with the Alamans,

another German tribe, who fought so fiercely that he feared the battle would go against him. Then he lifted up his voice and said, 'Thou God whom Clotilda adores, I promise Thee perpetual service if Thou wilt give me the victory over my enemies.' The victory was his, and Clovis went back to find Clotilda at Rheims, and tell her that he was willing to become a Christian. Full of joy, she hastened to tell Remigius the bishop. Clovis and three thousand of his warriors gathered together, to hear the truths of the Christian faith. When Remigius told him of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, he exclaimed: 'Had I been there with my Franks, I would have avenged His injuries.' Clovis was baptized on Christmas Day in the year 496, and as he bowed his head to receive the waters of baptism Remigius said, 'Adore what you have burnt, and burn what you have adored.' Many of his warriors were baptized with him, and Remigius did not cease to toil for the conversion of the Franks.

Little by little, Clovis conquered the other tribes which had settled in Gaul, or France, as it in time began to be called after the Franks. He made Paris his capital, and improved the city and built churches there. He caused many other Frankish kings to be cruelly killed, that he might have no rivals to fear. But he did not drive out or destroy the people whom he found living in the land—the Gallo-Romans, as they are called. These men had lost the courage which used to make the Gauls such great warriors, and they could not stand against the Franks. But they had learnt much from the Romans, and were much cleverer and more civilised than the Franks. As time went on, and the Franks settled down, they learnt much from the

Gallo-Romans. We have seen already that they took their religion. They took also many of their customs and laws, and they took even their language, though they added some of their own words to it. But the French of to-day, though they are called after the Franks, are a mixed race, and are more like the old Gauls than the Franks. The Franks went very little into Southern Gaul, or Aquitaine, where the Goths had settled; and in Eastern Gaul the Burgundians had settled and formed the kingdom of Burgundy.

The France of Clovis, therefore, was much smaller than the France of to-day. It was in the north, then called Neustria, that his power was greatest. But even there he had not destroyed the people of the land, as the Angles and Saxons destroyed the Britons. The Frankish conquest of Gaul was like the Norman conquest of England. The Franks became the chief men in the land, but the Gallo-Romans lived on under them, and did most of the work in the land.

The Successors of Clovis.—After the death of Clovis his kingdom was divided amongst his four sons. They were fierce and brutal men, and were always quarrelling and fighting with one another. The history of France during the next hundred years is nothing but a history of fighting and murders and terrible crimes. There was great suffering for the people, who were at the mercy of the fierce warriors. The civilisation that the Romans had brought into the land disappeared in these terrible days. Some little learning was kept alive by the Church. Since the days of St. Martin many monasteries had sprung up, and in them alone could any quiet be found. There, men studied and worked with their hands, as jewellers and car-

penters. They tilled the land also, dividing their time between prayer, work, and study.

In spite of all their fighting and quarrelling amongst themselves, the power of the Merovingian kings grew. They conquered the Burgundians, and stretched their power further towards the east. Sometimes the kingdom was divided between several kings, and sometimes it was united under one rule.

Dagobert, 628-638.—The greatest of all the Merovingian kings, except Clovis, was Dagobert. He was feared far and near. He visited the different parts of his dominions, that he might bring order to them. He gave justice to all who came before him, whether rich or poor, so that all said he was a man of God. At Paris, Dagobert built the church and abbey of St. Denis, where most of the kings of France were buried. He had it richly adorned, within and without, by a famous worker in gold and precious stones, Elvi, his chief adviser, who afterwards became a bishop and a saint.

Fainéant Kings.—After Dagobert came a number of kings so weak and foolish that they are called the *fainéant*, or *do-nothing* kings. They kept little but their flowing hair to show that they were kings, and lived on their farms in the country with but few servants round them. The chief man in the land was no longer the King but the Mayor of the Palace, a minister whose business at first had been to manage the king's lands and bring up the royal children. All the great lords were eager to fill this important office. But it fell at last to Pepin d'Héristal, a man who owned wide lands between the Rhine and the Meuse, in the district called Austrasia. He did not care to take the title of king from the

Merovingians, but he really ruled himself. Pepin won much fame by driving back a heathen German race called the Saxons, who were trying to press across the Rhine into the Frankish land. He was so powerful that after his death the office of Mayor of the Palace stayed in his family.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE

Charles Martel, 714-741.—Pepin's son Charles succeeded his father as Mayor of the Palace. He was called *Martel*, or the hammer, from the way in which he overthrew his enemies. The people of Austrasia were very glad to have him as their leader ; but the Frankish lords in Neustria, the district round Paris, were jealous of him, and tried to put him down. He won three battles over them, and so became leader of all the Franks, though he still allowed one of the feeble Merovingians to call himself king.

A great danger threatened Europe in those days. About the year 600 Mohammed had preached a new religion in Arabia. He had made the Saracens put away their idols and worship God, and honour himself as the greatest prophet whom God had ever sent amongst men. He had told them to carry this new religion by the sword through the world. The Saracens had spread all along the north of Africa, conquering as they went. Then they had crossed into Spain and pressed on into France. They defeated Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine, the southern part of France. Eudes fled to ask help of Charles Martel, and Charles and his men hastened to save Christendom from the Saracens. They

came upon them just as they were hoping to plunder the rich monastery of St. Martin at Tours. The two armies met near Poitiers; for nearly seven days they watched one another. At last the fight began. The Saracens with their sabres dashed themselves in vain against the Franks, gathered like an immovable sea around their leader. They fought till nightfall. In the morning the Franks arose to go on with the battle. They saw stretched before them the tents of their enemies, but when they looked closer the tents were empty. In silence the Saracens had fled in the night, and Christendom was saved.

Till his death Charles continued his work of driving the Saracens out of France. He also made the Burgundians obedient to him, and increased his power on every side.

Pepin the Short becomes King, 752.—Charles was succeeded by his sons, Pepin le Bref, or the Short, and Carloman. After six years Carloman retired into a monastery, and Pepin ruled alone. He felt it was time to get rid of the useless Merovingian kings, and sent two bishops to Rome to ask the Pope what should be done with him who had the name, but not the power of king. The Pope answered, that it would be better that he who had the power should also have the name. Then Pepin shaved off the long hair of the last Merovingian and shut him up in a monastery. The Franks who, according to the habits of the Germans, claimed the right to choose their king, joyfully proclaimed Pepin king.

The Carlings.—With Pepin begins therefore the 2nd *dynasty*, or family, of Frankish kings called the Carlings, or sons of Charles, after Charles the Hammer,

the founder of their greatness. You must think of Pepin as ruler of the Franks, not as ruler of France as we know it now. His power stretched far across the Rhine, for there also the Franks were the ruling people. He was even called into Italy to help the Pope against his enemies. In Gaul, Pepin spread his power to the south, driving the last of the Saracens over the Pyrenees, and adding Aquitaine to the lands of the Franks. So for a time the Franks were the chief people in Europe.

Charles the Great, 768-814.—Pepin died in 768, and his son Charles succeeded him. He is generally known as Charlemagne, that is, Carolus Magnus, or Charles the Great. He was one of the greatest rulers whom the world has ever seen. In the midst of those wild peoples, he built up a great Christian empire, and strengthened it by close friendship with the Pope, the spiritual ruler of the world. He was called into Italy by the Pope to fight against the Lombards, who were again troublesome. He defeated their king and shut him up in a monastery, and had himself crowned with the iron crown of Lombardy. He crossed the Pyrenees into Spain, and drove back the power of the Saracens. Returning in haste from this war, a misfortune befell his army in the mountains. Charles was on ahead, and his rear was being led through the narrow mountain pass of Roncesvalles, when the enemy fell upon them from hiding-places in the woods and rocks, and utterly destroyed them, before Charles could come to their rescue. The great warrior Roland was among the slain, and he became the hero of Frankish song; three hundred years later a famous poem was written, called the *Chanson de Roland*, which tells of the brave

deeds done by the knights of Charles the Great in the war against the Saracens. Roland, whom the legend calls Charles's nephew, is the bravest of all the knights, and the poem tells us of the mighty strokes that he wielded with his good sword Durandal in the pass of Roncesvalles, and how he blew on his enchanted ivory horn Olifant, making the hills resound as long as breath was left in his body.

The people who gave Charles the most trouble were the Saxons, who lived in the north of Germany, along the Elbe, men of the same race as those who had conquered Britain three hundred years before. They were still heathens, and a fierce and warlike people. Charles often defeated them, but they rose again as soon as his back was turned. At last he crushed them entirely, though not without using great cruelty. Then he sent Christian teachers amongst them, caused churches to be built, and gave them just laws, so that in time the Saxons became faithful subjects.

Charles the Great becomes Emperor, 800.— We cannot follow all the wars of Charles the Great. On all sides he extended his dominions; they reached to the Oder in Germany, to the Theiss in Hungary, the Garigliano in Italy, the Ebro in Spain. In all things he had been the friend of the Pope; and now, when he was the greatest prince in Christendom, the Pope was willing to crown him Emperor; so that, as the Pope ruled the spiritual affairs of Western Christendom, he might rule the temporal affairs.

After the building of Constantinople by Constantine, the first Roman emperor who became a Christian, there had been for many years two emperors—one in the East, ruling at Constantinople, and one in the West,

ruling at Rome. Since the invasions of the barbarians, there had been no Emperor in the West, but now Charles



ST. PETER GIVING THE PALLIUM TO LEO III., AND A BANNER TO CHARLES THE GREAT.

(From a Mosaic in the Lateran.)

was great enough to bear the old title. On Christmas Day he was crowned emperor in the church of

St. Peter at Rome by the Pope, whilst the people with shouts of joy saluted him as Carolus Augustus, great and pacific emperor of the Romans.

So it was that a ruler taken from the German peoples became Holy Roman Emperor. In after-times the emperor was chosen by the chief princes of Germany, but he could only be crowned and anointed by the Pope in Rome.

Government of Charles the Great.—Charles the Great was not only a mighty conqueror, he worked hard to give good government to all his vast dominions. He placed *counts* in the different provinces, to judge wrongdoers and to collect the taxes. He bade them treat every one with moderation, and be the defenders of the widows and orphans. He wished to know how things were going on in every part of his empire, and with this object he sent two trusted counsellors—generally a bishop and a count, called *missi dominici*, messengers of the master—into every province to see that the counts were doing their work properly. Then he used to gather all the chief nobles, bishops, and abbots round him, to discuss the laws which he and his advisers had drawn up, which were called capitularies. With all those who came together Charles talked freely, trying to learn from each the condition of his country, joking with the young, and treating the old with respect and reverence.

Charles liked best to live at Aachen, where he had built a beautiful church and palace, adorned with precious marbles from Italy. There was also a great swimming-bath, where he loved to swim with his sons and his nobles. His other favourite amusement was hunting. He was very fond of his family, and took his



& Co., London, New York & Bombay.





Creighton's France, p. 20.

Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York & Bombay.

daughters with him on his journeys, and even on his hunts and wars. He was a tall, strong man, with brilliant eyes and a big nose. He liked to eat quantities of roast meat, but he was temperate in drinking. He loved learning, and set up schools in the churches and monasteries, and had a school at his palace for his own children and those of the court. He had not been taught much in his youth, but he tried to educate himself as a man; he learnt Latin well, and was interested in astronomy and other studies. He tried hard to learn to write, but without much success. On his journeys he visited the different schools he had set up, and examined the children in their progress. When once he found that the noble children had been idle, he spoke to them in a voice of thunder, rebuking them because, proud of their birth and their riches, they had neglected their studies; if they did not improve, he bade them expect no favour from him.

He gathered learned men from all countries to his court. Chief of these were the Englishman Alcuin, a pupil of Bede, Charles's trusted friend and adviser, and Eginhard, a Frank, who wrote his life.

This great ruler died at Aachen in the year 814; he was buried in the church which he had built, and his statue was placed upon his tomb.

Successor of Charles the Great.—Charles the Great was so wise a man that he was able to rule and keep in order his mighty empire. It was made up of so many different peoples that only his strong hand could hold it together. His son Louis succeeded him. He was a good, kindly man, who won the surname of the Debonnaire by his gentleness, but he was more fit to be a monk than a king. He tried to do right, but he

governed very foolishly. His own sons rebelled against him, and twice succeeded in driving him from the throne. They hoped to force him to become a monk. But Louis's party was each time strong enough to bring him back again. When he died, his empire was divided among his sons.

Charles the Bald, 840.—Charles the Bald, the youngest son, had France for his share, and he and his brother Louis joined together against the eldest brother Lothaire, who was king of Italy, and emperor. They defeated him in a great battle, and afterwards went together to Strassburg, where they took a solemn oath of friendship to one another in the presence of their armies. In this oath we see how the French language was growing up as something quite distinct from the German. Charles the Bald took his oath in German, that Louis's soldiers might understand him; Louis swore in French, that Charles's soldiers might understand. This language, which was called French, was really the old tongue spoken by the Gallo-Romans, a kind of Latin to which a good many German words had been added by the Franks.

Treaty of Verdun, 843.—Shortly after this the three brothers made peace, and Charlemagne's empire was divided into three parts—France, Germany, and Italy. The country which was called France, and which fell to the share of Charles the Bald, was not so large either as the Gaul of Roman times or as France is at present. It was bounded by the Meuse, the Saone, and the Rhone. Its people were a mixture of races, but the Gallo-Romans and the Franks had now become one people, and it was their language that was spoken.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMING OF THE NORTHMEN

The Northmen.—In the days of Charles the Bald, a new race of invaders came to trouble France. These were the Northmen, who came in their swift boats from Denmark and Norway, and sailed up the rivers plundering and burning wherever they went. They were heathens, and had no respect for churches and monasteries. The monks and priests fled before them, trying to save their treasures by carrying them into strong cities.

Charles the Bald was quite unable to resist these terrible enemies. He could not even keep his own kingdom together. The Bretons revolted and set up a king of their own ; the people of Aquitaine did the same. Each place tried to defend itself from the Northmen as best it could. Castles were built, within whose strong walls men sought shelter, when the boats of the Northmen appeared. All that Charles did was to bribe the Northmen with money to stay away, but this only tempted more to come.

The Capetians.—The man, who fought most bravely against the Northmen, was Robert the Strong, to whom Charles gave the charge of the country between the Seine and the Loire. He kept them

back till he was himself killed in battle. He was the founder of the Capetian family, which was to give so many kings to France.

The Feudal System.—The sons of Charles the Bald, Louis II. and Louis III., were not better rulers than he had been; and it was whilst the kings were so feeble, that the power of the great lords grew so strong. Men were more willing to obey the great lord who lived near them, in his strong castle with his men-at-arms, than the king who was far off, and did not know how to make himself obeyed. They were glad too of the protection of the great lord, when the fierce Northmen came on their plundering raids. They promised the lord obedience and certain services, and in return for these promises he would give them portions of his lands. In this way there grew up what is called the *feudal system*. The land which each man held was called his *fief*; he had received it from his superior lord, whose vassal he was, whom he was obliged to obey and fight for. When a vassal received his *fief*, or when a son inherited the lands of his father, he had to pay *homage* for them. The vassal knelt before his lord and swore to be his *homme* or man. The great lords were the king's vassals, but they had under them so many vassals that they were nearly as great as the king himself. In their castles, girt with strong walls and deep ditches, they could do as they liked, and had no need to fear the feeble king. The poor were quite at their mercy. Only the men who held land were looked upon as free; the peasants who tilled the land were serfs. If the land was given away or sold the serfs went with it, but they could not be taken away from their families and sold as slaves. Still, their

state was very miserable ; they had to pay heavy taxes and work very hard, and often the harvests which they had gathered with bitter toil, were taken from them by the lords. Many rich lands were held by the Church, and the bishops and abbots were among the chief men of the land, and had many vassals under them.

The Northmen besiege Paris, 885.—The grandsons of Charles the Bald died young, leaving only a boy of five to succeed them ; so the crown of France was given to another Carolingian prince, the Emperor Charles the Fat. He was a gentle and pious man, but helpless against his enemies. In his days the Northmen sailed up the Seine to besiege Paris. An old song tells that they had a fleet of 700 sailing ships, besides small boats. Stupefied at the sight, men asked where was the river, since only boats could be seen. Paris had spread from the island in the middle of the river, to the banks on either side. Two bridges fortified with strong towers connected the island with the mainland. All the city was surrounded with new walls to resist the attack of the pirates. The men of Paris were full of courage, and they had a brave man, Eudes, for their Count. For a year they held out under his leadership. The Normans again and again attacked the walls with fury. They ravaged all the country around, killing old and young, destroying the vines and the crops. The heroes in Paris still held out, even when the plague broke out amongst them and added to the horrors of the siege. Then Eudes escaped from the city, to beg Charles the Fat to hasten the help, which he had so long promised to bring. Eudes himself did not stay away a moment longer than he needed



EODES.

(From the Cathedral at Chartres.)

One morning those who were anxiously watching in Paris, saw the rising sun gilding the armour of their Count, as he appeared with his warriors on the heights of Montmartre. Galloping his horse, he passed through the Normans, and got safe within the walls of the city.

The lazy Charles took three months to bring his army to Paris, and when he came he would not risk a battle. To his shame, he only bribed the Northmen to go away. In return for his money, they promised to leave the land in peace; but they did not heed their promise, and only turned away to plunder other parts of France.

Eudes Count of Paris becomes King, 888.—The Franks, disgusted with the cowardice of Charles the Fat, deposed him. He was the last to rule over France and Germany at the same time. The brave Eudes was chosen king of France in his place. But after a while some tried to make a prince of the Carolingian house, Charles the

Simple, king. So the Franks quarrelled instead of uniting to resist the Northmen, who overran France again. Violence ruled in the land, and the laws neither of God nor men were respected.

The Northmen settle in France, 911.—Eudes died, worn out with his many wars, and all took Charles the Simple for king. But the power of the king was gone. The great lords did as they liked in their own lands, and the Northmen returned again and again to plunder, directed by a fierce and warlike chief named Rollo. Charles the Simple did nothing to save his country. At last, when roused by the loud complaints over the misery of France, he only sent to Rollo to offer him his daughter in marriage, and a large portion of land from the sea to the river Epte to settle in. Rollo was asked to promise in return, that he and his followers would be baptized, and do homage to the king for his duchy, which was called Normandy. Rollo agreed to these terms, and he and the king met to conclude peace on the banks of the Epte. When he was told that he must do homage by kissing the king's foot, he answered proudly, 'Never will I bend my knee to any one nor kiss his foot.' At last he was persuaded to bid one of his warriors do homage for him. The rough Northman seized the king's foot, and lifted it to his lips in such a manner that the king fell over backwards, amidst shouts of laughter from the bystanders. Rollo and his warriors were baptized at Rouen. He then settled his land, granting it out in portions to his followers. The land which had been ravaged by the Northmen, was now cultivated by them, and the churches and cities which they had overthrown, were built up again.



ROLLO, DUKE OF NORMANDY.

Rollo is said to have established such good order in his duchy, that some golden bracelets which he hung one day upon an oak in a forest, where he was hunting, remained there for three years without any one daring to touch them.

The End of the Carling Rule.—The French were tired of the weakness of Charles the Simple, and they said they would have Robert, Count of Paris, for their king. He was killed soon after in battle, and then his son-in-law, Raoul, Duke of Burgundy, was chosen king. Still, there were some who thought that the king should be a Carling, and when Raoul died, the Count of Paris, who was the chief man in the land, rather than be king himself, chose to put first a son, and then a grandson of Charles the Simple on the throne. But the barons at last thought that it was best that the man who had the power should also have the name of king. They met together and chose Hugh Capet, Count of Paris, to be their king. You have seen how the counts of Paris won fame by their brave fighting against the Normans. Twice before one of them had been chosen king, but after Hugh Capet the monarchy remained in their family. With the Capetian kings in 987, really begins the history of France as we know it now, for the Carlings in their great days belonged rather to Germany than to France.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST CRUSADE

Hugh Capet, 987.—The lands which belonged to Hugh, king of France, formed but a very small part of the country that we now call France. He had his own duchy of Paris, or the Ile de France, and to this he now added the lands round Laon, which had belonged to the Carolingian kings. This little district was surrounded by the states of the great vassals. First came those who had received their lands as gifts from former kings, the Counts of Anjou, Chartres, and Champagne. Then came those who were really as great, or perhaps greater than the king himself, the Dukes of Burgundy, Aquitaine, Toulouse, Flanders, and Normandy. They did homage to the king for their lands, but this was a mere form, and within their own duchies they did as they liked. The Duke of Brittany did not even owe him homage. As the king of France had no sea-border of his own, his position did not lead him to have much to do with any but his own vassals. The first question for him was how to make himself really chief amongst them. We shall see how, little by little, the power of the Capetian kings grew,—how they by degrees made the lands of their vassals their own, till



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Craighton's France, p. 30.

Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York & Bombay.

the king of France became one of the chief rulers in Europe.

The Church was the chief supporter of the new royal family. The Capetians were pious men and close friends of the clergy, who in their turn upheld their power, and helped to make the people look up to them.

Robert I., the Pious, 996-1031.—Hugh Capet was succeeded by his son Robert, called the Pious. He had been brought up by the monks; and his life, written by one of them, has come down to us, and is full of stories of his piety. He allowed the poor to come round him constantly, and loved to give alms, and to tend the lepers with his own hands.

One day when Robert was at a feast a beggar seated himself at his feet, and the king passed him food from his own plate. The beggar meanwhile with a knife cut off the golden fringe, which adorned the king's dress, and carried it away unnoticed. But as Robert rose from the table, the queen saw what had happened, and exclaimed angrily, 'Is it thus that you allow yourself to be dishonoured?' 'I am not dishonoured,' answered the King; 'this gold was doubtless more necessary to him who has taken it, than to me.'

Weakness of the first Capetian Kings.—Robert, his son Henry I., and his grandson Philip I., were all weak kings. Their reigns lasted from 996 till 1108, and this was a miserable time for France. The king was not strong enough to keep the nobles in order, and they were constantly at war with one another. In these wars it was the poor serfs who suffered most. Their homes and crops were plundered or burnt, and they themselves often left to die of starvation. In this misery the only help came from the Church. In 1041,

the clergy succeeded in getting the nobles to respect what was called the Truce of God. This forbade fighting between every Thursday evening and Monday morning, as well as during Advent and Lent, and on all feast-days. As the Church threatened with excommunication those who did not keep the truce, and men were afraid of dying excommunicated, many were led to obey, and learnt to live quietly at least for part of the year. The clergy were also active in building churches; and many monasteries arose, where men could lead quiet lives and give themselves to study.

William of Normandy.—The greatest man of those days was William, Duke of Normandy. He became duke when he was only a boy, and though many enemies tried to take advantage of his youth, he grew to be so great a ruler, that in 1066 he was able to lead his vassals to conquer England. So the Duke of Normandy became King of England, and was a mightier prince than his suzerain lord, the King of France.

The First Crusade, 1095–1099.—In those days the Christian pilgrims, who wished to visit the holy places in Jerusalem, had to suffer many things from the Saracens or Turks, who had captured the holy city. One of the pilgrims, a monk called Peter the Hermit, had seen with horror the sufferings of the Christians in Palestine. He felt sure that, if the princes and people of Europe knew what went on, they would hasten to drive the Turks out; and he decided to spare neither pains nor fatigue, but to travel all over Europe and urge on men to the holy work. He was a small, common-looking man, and walked barefoot, clad in a monk's

cloak ; but the burning words which he spoke stirred men's hearts. Crowds hung upon his lips, and were ready to do all he bade them.

The Pope, Urban II., had also heard of the hardships of the pilgrims, and he bade the Christians of Europe gather together at Clermont in France, to discuss what should be done. Numbers of bishops and abbots and about 100,000 people met together. The words of the Pope and of Peter the Hermit, urging them to deliver Jerusalem from slavery, were received with tears, and cries of 'It is the will of God!' Nearly all present determined to help the glorious work, and fastened red crosses on their clothes. All who went to fight the infidels were called Bearers of the Cross, and from this the holy war was called a Crusade.

The enthusiasm spread far and wide. Fathers did not dare to keep back their sons, nor wives their husbands. The roads were crowded with men and women, rich and poor, marching with songs of joy to the holy war. The people would not wait, and a confused crowd which numbered some 500,000 people, led by a soldier named Walter the Penniless and by Peter the Hermit, started for the Holy Land. Many of them perished by the way, and the starving crowd which did reach Constantinople, was not at all welcome to the Emperor. He sent them on to Syria at once, where they were surrounded by the Turks and almost all killed.

Siege of Antioch.—Meanwhile the barons, who knew better the real difficulties of the expedition, were gathering together their forces. Three great armies marched, by different ways, and met at Constantinople. Godfrey of Bouillon, a French noble, was chosen general

of the whole army, in which were men of many different nations, but the greater number were either French or Normans.

When the Crusaders reached Asia Minor, they had a long and painful march through burning deserts, till they came to the walls of Antioch. Many perished by the way of thirst and hunger; others, weary of their hardships, deserted the army; but Godfrey of Bouillon, with those who were as devoted as himself, pressed on with cheerful courage in spite of difficulties. Antioch commanded the way to Jerusalem, and was strongly fortified. For seven months the Crusaders tried in vain to take it. Then one of them, by bribing a Saracen Emir, got possession of three of the towers; and in the midst of a frightful storm of wind and thunder, the Christians forced their way into the city. But they had little time to enjoy their conquest; for they were immediately besieged themselves by a large Saracen army.

Famine and pestilence added to the despair of the Christians, and many gave up all hope of success and returned to Europe. But Godfrey did not lose courage. At last even horse-flesh began to fail them. Then it was that a priest declared that St. Andrew had thrice appeared to him, and told him of a place in a church in Antioch, where was hidden the lance, which had pierced our Blessed Lord on the Cross.

The finding of this sacred lance filled the despairing Crusaders with new courage. With the lance carried in front of them, they sallied from the city to attack their enemy. The Turks, seeing how few they were, thought that they meant to flee, not to fight; but so furious was the attack of the Christians, that they carried

all before them. They drove away the Turks and captured their camp, with all its stores of food and luxuries.

Capture of Jerusalem, 1099.—After lingering some time in Antioch, the Crusaders set out for Jerusalem. There were only 50,000 of them left, whereas at Constantinople they were said to have numbered



JESTER, TWELFTH CENTURY.

600,000. Many were ill and worn-out with their toils. But their enthusiasm grew as they drew near the Holy City, and when at last they caught sight of its

towers, tears streamed from their eyes. They fell on their knees with outstretched arms and kissed the holy ground, whilst cries of 'Jerusalem !' and 'It is God's will !' filled the air.

The city was well defended, and the Crusaders outside the walls suffered terribly from heat and want of water. They made three wooden towers, which were rolled up to the walls, and from these they tried to make a breach. After a siege of forty days, they forced their way in. Then they took a frightful revenge for their own toils and the sufferings of the pilgrims. In the narrow streets of the city they cut down the hated Turks, till blood flowed in rivers ; 70,000 men are said to have perished.

The Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1099.—Godfrey of Bouillon took no part in this frightful massacre. He hastened as soon as possible to lay aside his arms and go barefoot to the Holy Sepulchre. The rest, when their fury was satisfied, followed his example. They washed their hands, changed their dress, and went singing holy hymns to visit the sacred places.

The next business was to take steps to keep safe, what they had won with so much toil. All felt to whose courage and patient effort their success was due, and that Godfrey of Bouillon alone was fit to be king of Jerusalem. He refused to be called king, saying that he was unfit to wear a crown of gold in the city where Jesus had worn a crown of thorns. He took the title of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre, and set to work to put in order the new State, which the French desired to found in this far-off country. Only a small number of the Crusaders stayed to help him ; the rest were eager to get home again. For fifty years

Europe left the little kingdom to itself. Godfrey died the year after his election, and was succeeded by his brother Baldwin.

Dangers surrounded the Christians in the Holy Land, and all their courage and all their efforts failed in the end. They could not found a strong Christian kingdom in a hot climate and a barren land, and Jerusalem was only won from the infidels for a short period. So the Crusades were really a failure, but they brought about much that was good. The barons left off fighting against one another, that they might fight together against the Turks. By joining with so many others of different countries for the same object, they learnt how to get on with other men, and to understand something about the big world that was outside their own castle walls. In their long journeys they saw much that was new, and learnt much of the wisdom of the East. Trade with the East became possible, and its treasures of spices and carpets and beautiful stuffs were brought to the West.

Chivalry.—It was chiefly through the Crusades that the customs of chivalry grew up. These were the rules which guided the conduct of a knight. At the age of seven the training of the future knight began. At first he was a page, and had to follow his lord when hunting, and wait upon him at table, and practise himself in every bodily exercise. At fifteen he became a squire, and then he might follow his lord to war. Sometimes some brave act made him worthy to be raised to knighthood on the field of battle. Otherwise, at the age of twenty-one, after solemn ceremonies and prayers, he was clothed in full armour and knighted with a stroke on the shoulder from the flat of the sword of his lord.

A knight was bound to be brave and courteous, to respect women and protect the weak. In those rough times, chivalry helped much to make men gentler and more kindly to others.



MOWING. (*Psalter, twelfth century.*)

CHAPTER VI

THE GROWTH OF THE TOWNS

Louis VI., le Gros, 1108-1137.—The Crusades took away from France many of the wild barons, who had troubled the land with their fighting and lawless deeds. Their absence helped both the king and the men of the towns to increase their power. And now at last France had a king worthy the name. This was Louis VI., who in his youth was called the 'Wide-awake,' but afterwards he grew so stout that he was called 'the Fat.' Under the rule of the feeble kings who had gone before him, even the small vassals who held lands in the royal domain itself had done just as they liked. Shut up behind the strong walls of their castles, they feared no one. Louis VI.'s first care was to bring them to obedience. His chief adviser was Suger, the wise abbot of the monastery of St. Denis in Paris, and Suger urged him to do all he could to make his royal power felt. One by one he put down his vassals, and in this way made the roads safe round Paris, for many of these barons had lived as robbers, plundering the merchants and travellers who passed along the roads.

The Communes.—The merchants were glad to have the protection of the king against the lawlessness

of the barons. In those days trades and industries were growing, and the people were no longer willing to bear the ill-treatment of the barons. The towns were becoming larger and richer, and the citizens wished to be allowed to manage their own affairs. In the south of France the towns had never quite lost the rights which they had in the Roman days ; but in the north, towns had grown up on the land, or round the castle, of some great lord, and the citizens were looked upon



PLOUGHING. (*From a Psalter, twelfth century.*)

as his serfs. They had to grind their corn in the lord's mill ; their women could not be married without his permission ; and he could force them to pay him such moneys as he chose. Some of the towns determined to submit to this no longer. They rose against their lords, many of whom were bishops, and demanded to be allowed to set up what was called a Commune ; that means, to have the right to be governed by persons chosen by themselves, and to settle their own affairs.

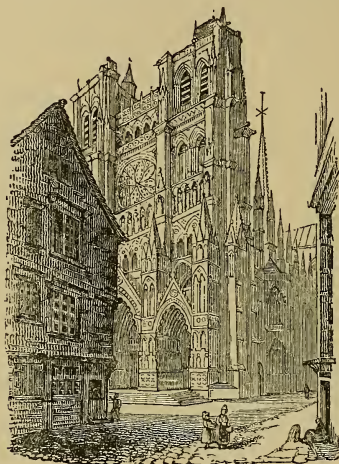
Sometimes they bought the right to have a Commune from those lords, who wanted money to help them to go to the Crusades. Sometimes they fought to gain their liberties.

The struggle at Laon.—In the city of Laon there were great disturbances. It had a bishop for its lord, and he was willing at first, as he loved money, to sell the citizens the right to have a Commune. But when he had spent all the money, he invited King Louis VI. to come to Laon, and persuaded him to say that the citizens should no longer have their commune. When it was known what the King had done, there was such rage in the town, that Louis thought it well to go away at once. All day the shops and the inns were shut; nothing was bought or sold; it was as if a terrible sorrow had fallen upon the city. Secretly the citizens planned their revenge. A few days after they rose, and, with shouts of ‘The Commune!’ armed with swords and lances and hatchets, they surrounded the bishop’s palace. They killed the nobles who came to help him, and at last forced their way into the palace. The terrified bishop hid himself in a barrel in his cellar. He was discovered, dragged into the streets, and killed by the blows of the furious people.

This murder was avenged by the nobles of the neighbourhood with great cruelty; but they could not quite put down the citizens. Sixteen years afterwards, the next bishop thought it best to grant a charter giving the people a Commune.

The first Communes.—Sometimes with similar struggles, sometimes more peaceably, other towns gained the right to set up a Commune. The earliest were Le Mans, Beauvais, St. Quentin, and Amiens. The

citizens who managed their own affairs, and cared for their own interests, grew rich and prosperous. The signs of their wealth can still be seen in the town halls, where the members of the Commune met together; and in the guild halls, where the weavers, goldsmiths, and others, each trade by itself, met to make rules for their work or to feast on their holidays. It was in the reign



AMIENS.

of Louis VI. that this time of prosperity for the merchants and craftsmen began. The beautiful cathedrals which were built, show both the wealth and piety of the people and the influence of the Church. Before long the pointed arch and delicate work of the Gothic builder began to take the place of the round arch and the solid masonry of the Normans. Nowhere can more noble churches be found than in the northern towns of France.

Strength of the Church.—The Church was strong in those days, and was the firm friend of the king. The clergy saw that the only way to put down the lawlessness of the barons was to strengthen the king's power. They also tried to lessen the sufferings of the poor. Suger freed the serfs of his Abbey of St. Denis, and Louis VI. imitated him and freed the serfs on the royal lands.

The Church also encouraged learning. Suger himself wrote a history of Louis VI., and he caused the monks of St. Denis to keep a chronicle, in which they put down the chief things that happened in the land. This chronicle was kept for nearly three hundred years, and tells us much about the history of France.

St. Bernard.—Many students began to gather in Paris to learn from the famous teachers at its schools, which grew into the great University of Paris. The holiest man of those days was St. Bernard, who founded the great monastery of Clairvaux, and did much to improve the teaching of the Church and the lives of the monks.

The Wars of Louis VI.—Louis VI. had many wars in his life, not only against his own great barons, but against Henry I. of England and the Emperor. It was in one of his wars, that Suger brought the serfs of St. Denis to fight for him under their banner, the Oriflamme, of flame-red silk with three points, which became the royal banner of France. 'Mont-joie St. Denis!' became after this the battle-cry of the royal army. Louis VI. caused his son Louis to be crowned king during his own lifetime, and he married him to the greatest heiress of the day, Eleanor of Guienne, who brought as her dowry the rich lands

in the south of France, Poitiers, Aquitaine, and Guienne—an immense addition to the power of the Crown.

Immediately after this marriage Louis VI. died, worn out with the toils of his active life, which had been made still more difficult by his enormous stoutness.

Louis VII., 1137-1180.—Louis VII. was called the Young, because he had been crowned when a mere boy. He had been brought up under the care of Suger, who had made him pious, but could not make him a wise king. Fortunately, he was sensible enough to leave the government very much in the hands of Suger. He was also very ready to listen to the advice of St. Bernard, who wrote to him about the evil of his wars with his vassals. It was in one of these wars that Louis VII. burnt down a parish church, in which some hundreds of poor people had taken refuge. Horrified at what he had done, he vowed to go on a Crusade as a penance. St. Bernard was full of zeal for the Crusade, and preached in favour of it, wandering from place to place, and rousing such enthusiasm, that it was often difficult to get enough crosses, to fasten to the clothes of those who were eager to take the vow, and Bernard had to tear up his own clothes to make them.

The Second Crusade, 1147.—Suger, who understood the work of a king better than Bernard, tried in vain to persuade Louis that it was his first duty to stay at home and care for his people. Louis VII. insisted in going on the Crusade. But when he reached Palestine, his only idea was to visit the holy places as quickly as possible, and then come back to France, leaving his army to its fate. Louis's young wife Eleanor had gone with him to the Holy Land, but she despised him when she saw what a poor soldier he

was, and said that he was more fit to be a monk than a king. He grew to dislike her so much that he did not wish to have her as his wife any longer, but Suger persuaded him not to divorce her.

Death of Suger, 1151.—Suger managed things wisely during the absence of Louis VII., and his wisdom was famed far and wide, so that men called him the Solomon of his age. He lived a simple, busy life, refreshing himself after his work with reading and talk. He slept little, and always rose early for prayer, showing the truest devotion to his religion. Men of all kinds came to see him, and none left him with a sad heart or empty hands. He died two years after Louis's return from the Crusade, having done a good work for his country. The year after his death, Louis divorced Eleanor, and in this way lost all the wide lands which she had brought as her dowry. Afterwards she married Henry of Anjou, who became Henry II. of England, and was the greatest ruler of his time.

Last Years of Louis VII., 1180.—The rest of Louis VII.'s reign was much troubled by wars with his mighty vassal Henry II. of England. In the hope of injuring Henry, Louis took up first the cause of Thomas à Becket and then of Henry's rebellious sons. In these struggles we see how much the power of the king of France had increased through the labours of Louis VI. and Suger. Louis VII. was a weak, foolish prince; but Henry II., with all his might, was not able to do him much harm, partly, of course, because Henry had so many other enemies. The towns, with all their wealth, were always ready to stand by the king in France. They were anxious to keep the liberties they had won, and knew that it was best to have the king for their

friend. These busy merchants and artisans were becoming a real power in France, and formed a new class by the side of the clergy and the nobles, which came in time to be called *the third estate*.

Louis VII. married twice after he divorced Eleanor. His third wife bore him a son, Philippe, called Auguste, because he was born in the month of August, who was crowned at the age of thirteen. Two years afterwards, at the death of his father, he became sole king.



VINTAGE, TWELFTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER VII

PHILIP AUGUSTUS

Early years of Philip Augustus, 1180.—The new king had as guardians his mother and the Count of Flanders; and the barons hoped that with a boy as king they would be able to do as they liked. But Philip soon showed that he meant to manage his own affairs, and teach the feudal lords that he was their superior. He was quick to make use of any chance of increasing his power, and by the time he was twenty he had added to the lands of the Crown the counties of Vermandois, Amiens, and Valois. He enriched himself and pleased the Church by persecuting the Jews, who were the money-lenders of those days. He took their lands and goods for himself, and banished them out of the country.

From the first, Philip looked upon Henry II. of England as his great rival. The lands which belonged to the French kings were small compared to those of the English king, and Henry II. knew well how to rule his wide realm. But troubles came to him through his sons, an unruly set of young men, with violent tempers and strong wills, who wished to be independent. Philip encouraged them in their discontent, and they joined with him against their father.

The Third Crusade, 1190.—At this time Europe was horror-struck at the news which came from the Holy Land. For some time dangers had gathered thick round the kingdom of Jerusalem. Its first kings had been heroes; but now, when the Saracens were growing strong under the wise and brave Sultan Saladin, the barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem were disputing who should be king, and the Christians quarrelled when there was most need of union. Saladin defeated them at the terrible battle of Tiberias in 1187, where the flower of the Christian knights were killed, and soon after captured Jerusalem and all the chief cities.

When this news reached Europe, for a moment all else was forgotten, and every one hastened to take the cross. Philip and Henry II. made peace, and agreed to go to the Holy Land, and all their chief barons did the same. In truth neither of the kings wished to start on such a dangerous expedition, and were little likely to make friends. War soon broke out again between them; and Richard, Henry II.'s son, sided with Philip. Worn out with the troubles of his busy life, Henry II. died in 1189; and Richard, known as the Lion-hearted, became king of England. Whilst rebelling against his father, he had been such friends with Philip that they had slept in the same bed, and drunk out of the same cup. But now they were rivals, and it was soon clear that their friendship was not very real.

They were both pledged to go on the Crusade, and, having ordered how their kingdoms were to be governed during their absence, they started in 1190. They met their fleets at Sicily; and the winds were so contrary that they decided to spend the winter there. Whilst waiting with nothing to do, quarrels and

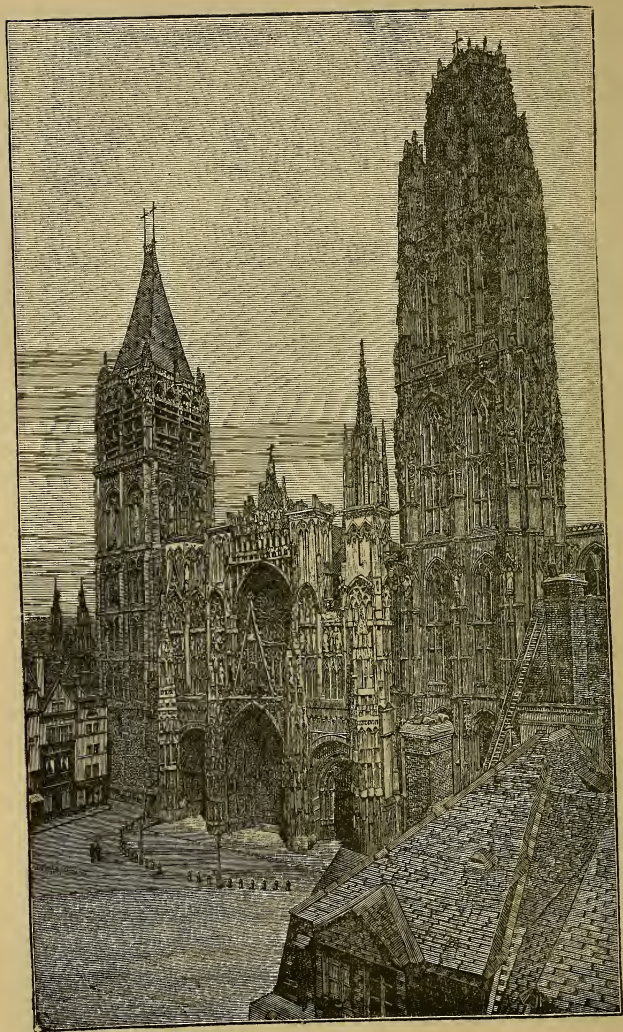
jealousies began, and before they reached the Holy Land the two kings and their followers were thoroughly irritated with one another.

Siege of Acre, 1191.—When Philip and Richard reached Palestine they found the Christians besieging



MEDAL OF RICHARD CŒUR DE LION, 1199.

Acre. A great army, made up of men of many nations, was gathered round its walls, and each knight tried to win fame by his bold deeds. None equalled Richard in valour, but he was so proud and passionate that he was always quarrelling with the other princes. At last Acre fell, and then Philip, jealous of the fame of



ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

his rival Richard, decided to go back to France ; he had never really cared for the Crusade, and longed to get back to his kingdom. He knew that if he was not as brave a knight as Richard, he was certainly a cleverer king.

Even Richard's valour could not make the third Crusade a success. The Christians were not united enough to carry out so difficult a task. Richard had to be contented with making a truce with Saladin, which allowed Christian pilgrims to visit the holy places in peace. This was the last time that so many kings and princes joined together to restore the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem.

Imprisonment of Richard the Lion-hearted.
—When Philip left Palestine he had promised to do nothing to injure Richard in his absence. But Richard was shipwrecked on his way home, and was taken prisoner whilst travelling through Germany in disguise. The Emperor, to whom he was given up, would not let him go without a large ransom. The temptation was too great for Philip, and he made friends with Richard's traitor brother John, who was trying to get the crown of England for himself. Philip marched into Normandy ; but before he could take Rouen, Richard was free again, and eager for revenge. For the next five years, there was almost ceaseless war between the two kings. When Richard died, and John succeeded him, Philip put aside his pretence of friendship, and did all he could to harm John.

When the first kings of the house of Capet sat on the French throne, and the power of the king was very weak, the Norman and Angevin kings of England had been great and powerful rulers. But now, when there was a king on the French throne determined to

increase his power, there was a feeble coward on the English throne, who could not defend his lands against his neighbour.

Philip and Ingeborg.—When Richard died, Philip was too full of his own affairs to take advantage at once of the weakness of John. He had married some years before a Danish princess, Ingeborg, but hardly had he seen her, when he was seized with a violent dislike for her. He persuaded the French bishops to allow him to divorce her, and he married another lady, Agnes of Meran, whom he dearly loved. But Ingeborg did not rest content, and asked the Pope to right her wrongs. The Pope, the same Innocent III. with whom John, king of England, quarrelled, bade Philip take her back. When Philip refused, he laid France under an interdict, which means that all religious services were stopped in the land. Philip loved Agnes and hated Ingeborg, and for four years he refused to obey the Pope. Then he felt it was hopeless to resist any longer, for the whole country groaned under the interdict; he put away Agnes, who is said to have died of grief, and took back Ingeborg.

Conquest of Normandy, 1204.—At peace with the Pope, Philip was able to turn against John, who by his wickedness and folly made himself hated by all. Arthur, the son of John's elder brother, was the lawful heir to the Duchy of Normandy. But John had seized him, and caused him to be secretly put to death. When every one was horror-struck at this cruel deed, Philip invaded Normandy. One after another its strong towns were taken, and then Philip went on to conquer some of the other lands held by the kings of

England in France, Touraine, Anjou, part of Poitou, and Maine. John did nothing to defend his possessions, and they easily fell into Philip's hands.

Battle of Bouvines, 1214.—Some years afterwards John tried to revenge himself on Philip, by persuading the Emperor and the Count of Flanders to make war on him. But Philip gained a great victory over their troops at Bouvines in Flanders. In this battle it was seen what good soldiers the men of the towns made; it was to them rather than to the knights that Philip owed his victory.

It seemed at one time as if Philip would win England itself from the hands of John. For the English barons, disgusted with the faithlessness of John, who would not keep his promise to observe the Great Charter, invited Philip's son Louis to come and be their king. But as John died soon after, the English preferred to have as their king his son Henry, and Louis returned to France.

Albigensian war.—Most of the north of France had been added by Philip to the royal domains. The feudal lords, who were still so powerful as to be almost independent of the king, were the Counts of Flanders and Champagne, the Duke of Brittany, and the princes of Southern France, chief amongst whom was the Count of Toulouse. The south of France was very different from the north. The influence of Rome had been strong there, and its people were much more polished and refined than their northern neighbours. They loved poetry and song, and the courts of the barons were thronged with poets and musicians. It was in these lands that certain religious beliefs hateful to true Catholics sprang up. The followers of this new religion

were called Albigensians, because most of them lived round the town of Albi. We do not know exactly what their opinions were, and they seem to have been good, simple people, who led a quiet life and only asked to be let alone. But in those days men still thought that it was possible to force every one to hold the same beliefs, and they thought it wrong to suffer any one to hold beliefs different from those of the Church. Raymond, Count of Toulouse, was blamed for leaving his Albigensian subjects in peace, and the Pope sent a legate to Toulouse to put down and excommunicate the heretics. Raymond, in his anger at this interference, longed to be revenged on the legate. Three of his followers, thinking to please him, pursued and slew the legate.

The Crusade against the Albigensians, 1208-1223.—Then the Pope called upon France to punish this crime, and a Crusade was preached against Raymond and the Albigensians. Many were glad to join this Crusade, some from real religious zeal against what they considered the terrible sin of heresy, others from love of adventure and a desire for the spoils of the rich lands of the south. The men of the north looked upon it as an opportunity to conquer the south. The leader of the Crusade was Simon de Montfort, a man fierce in his zeal for religion. He was the father of the Simon de Montfort who played such an important part in English history. The war was carried on with terrible cruelty. The town of Béziers, where many Albigensians were gathered, was besieged ; the Crusaders offered to spare it, if all the heretics named in a list they had made, were given up. This offer was indignantly refused. Then the walls were stormed, and all the



, Green & Co., London, New York & Bombay.

inhabitants, men, women, and little children, were put to death. When some one asked if the Catholics at least should not be spared, 'Kill them all,' was the fierce answer, 'for God knows his own.' Town after town, and castle after castle, was taken.

St. Dominic.—Amongst those who helped most to root out the Albigenian heresy was Dominic, a Spaniard, one of the greatest preachers who have ever been. His followers were called the Dominican friars. They did not live in convents, like monks, but wandered about to preach and teach. By Dominic's advice the Pope founded the Inquisition, a means of inquiry into the character of suspected heretics. Those who were thought to be heretics themselves, or to befriend heretics, were brought up before the judges of the Inquisition; sometimes they were tortured to make them confess. Those who confessed were ordered penances of different kinds—some to go as pilgrims to the Holy Land, some to wear crosses of yellow cloth as a sign of their guilt. Those who would not confess were kept in prison or burnt at the stake.

Thus, either by the sword of the Crusaders, or the terrors of the Inquisition, the heretics were gradually rooted out. Simon de Montfort was made Count of Toulouse, in place of Raymond. But Simon was killed when besieging Toulouse, by a stone thrown by a woman on the walls, which struck him in the breast. Then the son of Simon and the son of Raymond fought together for Toulouse.

Philip Augustus had taken no part himself in the Crusade against the Albigenians, though he had not prevented his barons from joining it. Neither would he help the young Montfort to make himself Count

of Toulouse. He was glad to see the power of the great lords of the south broken by these troubles, so that in time to come it would be easier to add their lands to the royal lands.

Government of Philip Augustus.—All his reign Philip worked to bring order into the government of the land. The king's court in his day began to be called *parlement*. We must not confuse it with our Parliament. It was a court of law, in which sat the nobles who were the chief advisers of the king, and the men, chiefly clergy, who were learned in the laws. Here the disputes between the barons, and their claims against the king, were discussed and settled. Over the royal domains Philip placed *baillis*, and under them provosts, men to judge cases and see that the laws were kept, and collect the taxes for the king. The *baillis* had to bring up their accounts to the *parlement*. The royal lands were well governed, and the towns on them prospered; the King was willing to grant them privileges in return for the money they gave him.

Paris.—Philip did a great deal to improve Paris. In his reign the streets, till then deep in black mud and filth, were paved, and he surrounded the city with a wall, flanked with towers. The building of the great cathedral of Notre Dame was begun; it is amongst the earliest of the cathedrals of France in which pointed arches are used, instead of round. Markets were built for the convenience of traders, as well as hospitals for the sick, and pure water was brought to the city. The University of Paris became the great centre of learning, where wise men taught the students, some of whom came begging their way, from all parts of Europe.

Death of Philip Augustus, 1223.—Philip died at the age of fifty-nine. He had more than doubled the domains of the kings of France, and added immensely to the royal power and to the consideration in which the king was held at home and abroad.



CHAPTER VIII

ST. LOUIS

Louis VIII., 1223-1226.—Philip Augustus was succeeded by his son Louis VIII., who was a much weaker man than his father. But Louis had a wife, Blanche of Castille, full of the strength and energy which he lacked, and she urged him on to activity. In his short reign of three years he had two wars, one against Henry III. of England, when he won from him La Rochelle and the Limousin, and the other to help the Count de Montfort in the south. Here he won several cities, amongst others Avignon after a long siege. During the siege fever attacked his troops; he himself caught the fever and died soon afterwards, having continued, in his short reign, his father's work of adding to the royal lands.

Regency of Blanche of Castille, 1226-1236.—The new king, Louis IX., was only ten years old at his father's death. His mother, Blanche of Castille, claimed to be regent, till he was old enough to rule himself. The great vassals thought that they would be able to do as they liked under the rule of a child and a woman. The Queen was a Spaniard, and had neither relations nor friends in France. The people of Paris, however, stood by her, and, when it seemed as if her child would be taken from her by force, the citizens

came to fetch him safely to Paris, lining the roads with their armed men, who called upon God to grant him a long and good life, and save him from his enemies. Blanche won over some of her enemies to her side, and made the Count of Provence her friend by marrying Louis and his brother Charles to his two daughters ; and in this way the strength of her enemies was broken.



THIRTEENTH CENTURY FALCONERS.

Education of Louis IX.—Blanche brought up her son strictly and well. She gave him masters to teach him all the learning of the day, and they were bidden to keep him in due discipline and not to spare the rod. She made him an earnest Christian and a true knight, and taught him to think highly of his duties as a king. So well did Louis carry out her lessons, that he was an example of what a king should be, and his holiness won him the name of Saint, so that

he has ever since been known as St. Louis. His father and his grandfather had added greatly to the royal power ; St. Louis wished to add to the wellbeing of his people, whom he loved, and to make peace instead of violence, reign in his lands.

Majority of St. Louis, 1236.—Blanche loved her son fondly, and he returned her love, and was willing to be directed by her in every way. Whilst she really managed the affairs of the kingdom, she kept herself in the background, and made it seem as if all was the doing of the boy-king. At the age of nineteen he was considered to have attained his majority. He was gentle and delicate-looking, and his manners were a great contrast to those of the rough warriors of the time.

He early showed his love of fair play. The Pope had quarrelled with the Emperor Frederic II., and offered to crown Louis's brother emperor in his stead. But Louis refused. He said that the Pope had no right to depose the Emperor and to call him guilty of crimes which had not been proved.

Louis had no wish to gain anything for himself except by perfect fairness. He was forced to make war on Henry III. of England, who joined himself to the discontented French barons. Louis twice defeated Henry III., and might, perhaps, have won Aquitaine from him. But he treated his defeated enemy gently. He settled the boundary between the English and French lands, and made the barons of the south choose to which of the two kings they would pay homage, so that there might be no more disputes.

First Crusade of St. Louis, 1248-1254.—During a serious illness which attacked St. Louis, he

vowed that, if he recovered, he would go on a Crusade to the Holy Land. His mother and his other advisers tried to persuade him that a king had other work to do ; but he was determined to go. He left his mother to govern in his absence. Amongst his companions on the Crusade was the Sire of Joinville, who wrote an account of it, and who is one of the best of the early French historians. Louis tried to get all his bravest knights to go with him. One evening the lights in the room, where he was sitting with his court, were suddenly put out, and when they were lit again, it was found that every one had a cross sewed on his shoulder. Thus many knights were made Crusaders against their will.

Louis sailed first to the island of Cyprus, where large stores of all things needed for the war were gathered. It was decided to attack the Moslems, not in the Holy Land itself, but in Egypt, the centre of their power. Damietta was then the chief port at the mouth of the Nile, and thither Louis sailed. The Sultan's troops were drawn up on the shore, to prevent the landing of the French. Jumping up to their waists into the sea, the French knights rushed upon the enemy with such fury, that they soon fled in terror. Damietta, full of rich stores of every kind, fell into the hands of the Christians. But then it was seen that Louis, though a brave knight, was not a clever general. If he had pressed on at once, he might have easily taken Cairo, for the Moslems were terror-struck. But he delayed some months, and then, leaving his Queen in Damietta, he set out to take Mansourah, a little town on the way to Cairo. The king's brother, Robert, dashing forwards with his men in front of the main army, was surrounded

and killed, to the bitter grief of the king. Louis again delayed; it was Lent, and he thought it right to wait quietly till the holy season had passed. Meanwhile fever, want of food, and the constant attacks of the Moslem, destroyed numbers of his men. At last, he was forced to order a retreat to Damietta. But, on the way, once more the army was furiously attacked by the enemy. The king, weak from sickness, and all his principal knights, were taken prisoners, and the Moslems cruelly slew all those who, they thought, were too poor to be able to pay a ransom.

St. Louis a Prisoner.—St. Louis bore his captivity with Christian patience, and felt no fear at the threats of his captors. At last he concluded a truce with the Sultan for ten years, and promised to give up Damietta and pay a large ransom, in return for which the Sultan promised to set free all the Christian prisoners in his hands.

Meanwhile the queen at Damietta had gone through a time of terrible anxiety, in the midst of which a son was born to her, whom she called John Tristan, or the Sad, because his birth fell in such evil days. When the knights, who were with her, wished to leave the town, she gathered them all around her and persuaded them to remain firm.

Damietta had to be given up. The king and queen, with some faithful knights, sailed to Acre, one of the few Christian cities left in Palestine. The rest of the French returned home.

Crusade of the Pastoureaux.—In France there had been great dismay at the king's captivity. His misfortunes only made him dearer to his people. The poorest were eager to help him, and an ignorant crowd

of serfs and shepherds gathered to go and deliver their king. This gathering was called the Crusade of the Pastoureaux, or shepherds. But they had no one



LOUIS IX. (*Engraved on a gem about 1314.*)

to lead them. They wandered about as an idle rabble, and at last took to plundering. Then the Queen Regent took steps to have them put down, and many were slain.

The regent wrote to St. Louis in the Holy Land,

begging him to return to France ; but he felt that if he turned his back on the East, all the Christians left there would perish. He sent his two brothers home, as they had vexed him by their idle ways and love of gambling. He himself stayed on for three years with his queen, Joinville, and a few faithful followers. He visited in turn the Christian ports in Palestine, and rebuilt their walls. But most of all he laboured to free those Christians who were kept as slaves by the Moslem. Wherever he could find them, he bought their freedom.

St. Louis returns to France, 1254.—But at last he heard that his mother was dead. Then he hastened home to take her place in governing France. He returned to Paris, very sad at the evil done to the Christian cause by the failure of his Crusade.

Government of St. Louis.—During the next fifteen years of his life St. Louis was busy with the care of his people. He loved peace, and carefully settled all disputed questions with his neighbours, the kings of Aragon and England, so that he might do away with all reason for war. Some of his nobles complained that he was too generous in his treaties with Henry III. of England, but he answered that he had done as he did, so that there might be love between his children and those of Henry III.

Louis wished that justice should be done in all things. Before his days, men had very commonly settled their quarrels by fighting. The idea had been, that God would give victory to the right ; but the weak had suffered, and the strong had triumphed. St. Louis put an end to these combats, and made all men come to be tried in his courts. There equal

justice was given to all, whether rich or poor, strong or weak.

Three boys, who were studying in a convent, had wandered into a neighbouring wood and amused themselves by shooting rabbits, with their bows and arrows. They were caught doing this by the men in charge of the wood, who took them to their master, the Sire de Coucy, a rich and powerful baron. He was cruel and without pity, and ordered the boys to be hung on a tree at once. When the abbot of the convent knew what had happened, he complained to the king, and Louis summoned the Sire de Coucy to appear before his court. The Sire de Coucy begged all his friends to come to the court and stand by him. Louis was very angry, and said that he had made up his mind that Coucy should die. At last he yielded to the humble prayers of the barons, and spared his life on condition that he paid a large fine and founded two chapels, where prayers should be offered daily for the souls of the three children. Thus the fierce barons were taught that, even on their own lands, they might not ill-use the weak and the helpless at their pleasure. It was thought a wonderful thing that so great a baron, accused only by poor people, should hardly escape with his life from the justice of the king.

Since questions were now to be decided in the king's court in accordance with the laws, Louis found that those who had carefully studied the laws were more helpful than the great lords; he therefore invited lawyers to sit in his court. At first the barons treated them with contempt, and made them sit on stools at their feet. But the learning and wisdom of the lawyers soon gave them the lead in the court. Louis

loved to hear the complaints of his people, and settle their quarrels. Often, when he was at the Castle of Varennes, he would go, after mass, and sit under an oak with his courtiers round him, and then any who liked might come to him and bring questions to be settled. In the same way, he would also sit sometimes in his garden in Paris, on a carpet spread upon the ground, and listen to all who came. The fame of his justice spread far, and he was asked to settle the quarrel between Henry III. of England and his barons. But lover of justice though he was, he could not understand the state of a country where he had never been, and his decision did not bring peace to England.

Second Crusade of St. Louis, 1270.—The dearest wish of St. Louis was to go once more on a Crusade. He asked Edward of England, who was afterwards Edward I., to go with him, that with his help he might triumph over the infidels. When Edward said that he had not money enough for so great an undertaking, Louis offered to lend him what was wanted. Louis was eager to have a companion who was both strong in body and upright in mind; so, having got his father's permission, Edward made ready to join the Crusade.

Louis's best advisers were against the Crusade. Joinville refused to go with him, and said that all who advised the Crusade were guilty of mortal sin, since whilst Louis was at home all the kingdom was at peace, both within and without. Besides, the king was in such weak health, that he could not even sit on horseback. Joinville had to carry him in his arms from one house to another the day on which he bade him

farewell. Yet he sadly adds in his History : ' If he had stayed in France, he might have lived some time, and done many good works.'

Louis insisted on going. This time he intended to attack the Moslem in Tunis, probably at the wish of his brother, Charles of Anjou. Charles had been made king of the Two Sicilies by the Pope, and the Moslem of Tunis, with their pirate boats, were troublesome neighbours to him. Louis reached Africa first, and awaited before Tunis the arrival of his brother Charles. There also he was joined by Edward of England. But the hot sun of Africa was too much for his feeble strength. When he felt that his end was near, he caused himself to be laid upon a bed of cinders. As long as he could speak, he did not cease to pray day and night, especially for those who were with him in such dangers. When his voice could not be heard, his lips still moved, and sometimes he opened his eyes, and looking sweetly on those around him, made the sign of the cross ; and so his spirit passed away.

Character of Louis IX. and his times.—

No king was ever a better man or a truer Christian than St. Louis. In all that he did, his object was to do what was pleasing to God, and good for his people. He was always gentle in his ways, and reproved those who had done wrong with soft words ; he knew how to make everything he had to say amiable. He was never heard to say evil of others. He cared for the sick and the poor, caused hospitals to be built, and visited them himself. He used to feel the pulses of the patients, ask questions about their illness, and advise how they should be treated. He tried to bring up his children well ; and at night he would gather

them around him, and tell them tales about the good kings and emperors of the past, whom they might take as examples. St. Louis is the hero of the middle ages,—the name given to the period which lies between ancient and modern history, when the nations of Europe were being formed. The thirteenth century, in which he lived, was the time when the art and the learning of



BELLMAN, END OF THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

the middle ages flourished most. Then were built the most beautiful cathedrals of France—Rheims, Amiens, Chartres, and others, grander even than our beautiful cathedrals. They were adorned with figures of saints and great men carved in stone, and with magnificent windows of painted glass. The art of painting flourished too, and the books of prayers and poems were adorned with lovely and delicate pictures. In Paris, Louis built a fair chapel, called the Sainte Chapelle, to hold the crown of thorns, said to have been worn by the Saviour, which was sent him from the East. With

his consent, his confessor, Robert de Sorbon, built a college, near the University, for poor students, which was called after him, the Sorbonne. Louis loved learning, and encouraged it in every possible way. One of the most famous of early French poems, the *Romance of the Rose*, was written in his day. It was translated a hundred years afterwards into English by Chaucer.

Not only in France, but in all Europe, Louis was honoured, and even the Arab historians praise him, and speak of his intelligence, firmness, and piety. In 1297 the Church put his name upon the list of her saints.

CHAPTER IX

THE FLEMISH WARS

Philip III., the Bold, 1270-1285.—St. Louis was succeeded by his son Philip, who became king under the walls of Tunis, whither he had accompanied his father. Philip, after making a treaty with the king of Tunis, returned home, taking with him the bodies of his father and his brother, John Tristan, who had also died of fever. This Crusade to Tunis was the last ever undertaken by Christian knights. After this, the different nations of Europe were too much occupied with their own affairs, and with their quarrels with one another, to unite together against the Moslem.

Whilst Philip was on his way home, his wife, who was with him, died of a fall from her horse. Philip's first duty on reaching Paris, was to bury his dead in the Abbey of St. Denis, the burial-place of the kings of France. About the same time Philip's uncle Alphonse died. He had married the daughter and heiress of the Count of Toulouse, and as he left no heir, their lands, the provinces of Poitiers and Toulouse, passed to King Philip III. Alphonse had ruled Toulouse wisely, and thus helped to bring the north and south of France peaceably together.

The Sicilian Vesper, 1282.—We do not know

much about the way in which Philip III. governed. The monkish writers praise him for his piety, and France enjoyed peace at home during his days. The knights, who wanted adventures, followed the fortunes of Philip's uncle Charles, Duke of Anjou, to whom the Pope had given the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily. Charles was a hard, cruel man, and the Sicilians hated him. A plot was made against the French, and on Easter Day 1282, as the bells were ringing for vespers, the Sicilians rose and massacred every French man, woman, or child. Then they invited Peter III., king of Aragon, one of the Spanish kingdoms, to come and rule over them.

When the French heard of the Sicilian Vesper, as this terrible massacre was called, they thirsted for revenge. The French nobles hastened to help Charles of Anjou to recover Sicily, and punish the rebels. But it was in vain. Sicily was lost to the French; and Charles died soon afterwards in rage and despair.

Meanwhile Philip III., who considered his uncle's cause as his own, had gathered a great army, and marched southwards to punish Peter of Aragon. The fury of the French showed itself, in the cruelty with which they killed all the inhabitants of the first Spanish city which they took. But the Spaniards resisted the French so obstinately that, after some slight success, Philip III. was forced to lead his worn-out army back over the Pyrenees. He was himself taken ill with fever, and died in the first French city which he reached.

Philip IV., the Fair, 1285-1314.—Philip III. was succeeded by his son, whose good looks earned him his surname *le Bel*, or the Fair. Philip IV. was seventeen when he became king. He had been married for some

years to Jeanne of Champagne, a great heiress. She had been taken, as a child of three, to the French court by her mother, on the death of her father, and had been brought up there. She was her father's only child, and heiress to all his lands, the kingdom of Navarre, which lay south of the Pyrenees, and the county of Champagne in the north-east of France. Philip III. had been eager to secure these rich lands; but the Pope, fearful of the growing power of the French kings, refused to allow the marriage of Jeanne with Philip III.'s eldest son, Louis, and she married his second son, Philip. Shortly afterwards Louis died; and so the Pope's precaution was in vain. Champagne and Navarre were added to the royal lands, when Philip ascended the throne.

Philip IV.'s Plans.—Philip the Fair did not care about the conquest of distant kingdoms like Naples and Sicily, but wished to be a strong king at home. He was a very clear-sighted man, cold and silent in his manner, who knew what he wanted, and meant to have his own way. He wished to add to his kingdom Flanders in the north, to win Guienne from the English in the south, and to move his border on the eastern side further back towards the Rhine; then France would have the boundaries which nature seemed to have given her. Philip IV. wished to make France one, just as Edward I. of England wished to make England, Wales, and Scotland one. Both kings tried to do what was impossible in their own days; but what they strove for came to pass in later days.

Philip's efforts to win Guienne from the English king mark the beginning of the long struggle with England, which went on for more than a hundred

years. Philip made friends with Edward's enemies, the Scots ; and Edward I. made friends with Philip's enemy, Guy de Dampierre, Count of Flanders. The Pope, however, persuaded the two kings to make a truce ; and Edward I.'s son, who afterwards became King Edward II., married Philip's daughter Isabel. Free from all fear of the English, Philip turned to attack Flanders.

War with Flanders, 1298.—Flanders was full of towns, which had grown rich and prosperous by the industry of their citizens. There the wool, grown on the backs of English sheep, was woven into cloth ; and merchants from all parts of the world met to exchange their goods in the markets of Flanders. These cities had won the right of managing their own affairs, but they looked up to the Count of Flanders as their suzerain lord. They did not care enough for him, however, to fight for him ; and without the help of the king of England he could not stand against Philip IV., so he thought it best to give himself up as his prisoner.

Then Philip IV. went to take possession of the lands of his prisoner. The Queen went with him ; and they were amazed and delighted at the sight of the riches of the cities. When the Queen saw the Flemish women, in gowns richly embroidered with gold and silver, she exclaimed with disgust, 'I thought I was the only queen of France, and here I see more than six hundred queens.' Unfortunately, Philip set up a man to govern Flanders who, greedy of gain and power, did not understand the independent spirit of the Flemish cities. When he tried to take away some of their privileges, the burghers revolted and massacred the French soldiers. Their leader was Peter Koenig, a weaver,

who led his followers to free one town after another from the French.

Battle of Courtray, 1302.—Robert Count of Artois got an army of knights together, and marched to punish the rebellious citizens, who were gathered at Courtray. The proud knights despised their enemy, since they were only fullers, weavers, and artisans of all kinds, and dashed upon them with thoughtless haste. The citizens had protected their camp with a deep ditch. Into this the knights fell; and the heavy armour with which they and their horses were covered, prevented them from rising; so that they struggled helplessly in the ditch, whilst the citizens like tigers dashed upon them, sparing no one in their fury. There was slain Robert of Artois himself, and many of the flower of the French nobility. A second army sent by the king against the Flemings was forced to retire. All the chief towns of Flanders combined in a league, and determined not to give in to the French.

Battle of Mons-en-Puelle.—Philip himself was busy with other matters; and it was not till some time afterwards that he was able to lead an army himself against the Flemings. He met them at Mons-en-Puelle, and in the furious battle that followed, the French fled, and Philip was left alone fighting desperately, with only ten men round him; his horse was killed under him, and his life was in the greatest danger; but when those who had fled saw that the king's standard still stood erect, they turned and drove back the Flemings.

This defeat did not crush the Flemings. The weavers left their looms, and the traders their business, to take up arms. They bound themselves by oath not to see their homes again till they gained a good peace or won

a victory. 'Better,' they said, 'to die in battle than to live in slavery.'

Philip was amazed to see another army gathered together against him in three weeks. 'I thought,' he cried, 'that I had destroyed them all, and see, they fall from the sky.' He judged it wiser to make peace with them, and gave them once more a Count of their own, the son of their last Count.

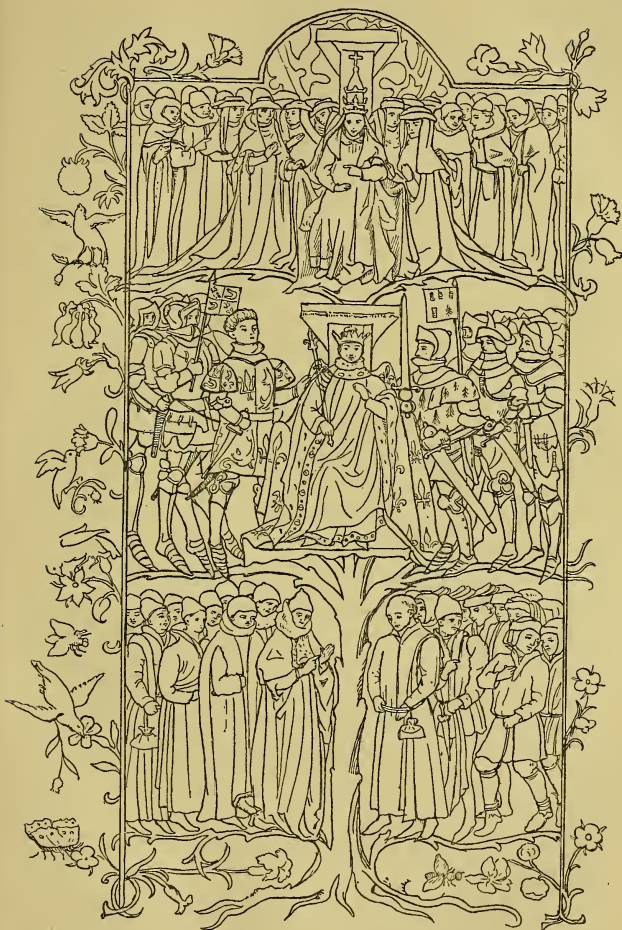
The Maltôte.—The wars with Flanders had cost a great deal, and Philip IV. found himself in great need of money. In former days, when the lands of the French kings were small, there had been no need to raise great sums of money. When the kings went to war, their vassals had to follow at their own expense. Now all was changed. The kings ruled over wide lands; they had to pay the baillis and prévôts, who ruled under them and kept order. The vassals and their followers no longer sufficed for wars which were carried on at greater distances and for longer times. The king had to hire other soldiers, who were called mercenaries, because they fought for pay. Philip IV. had to find out all kinds of ways to get money. He made every one who did not follow him to war, pay a tax for the expenses of the war. It was the first time that all the people had been taxed, and there were loudly raised murmurs. The tax was called the *maltôte*, the bad tax, because men thought it unjust, and protested against it. The Pope forbade the clergy to pay it, and this was the beginning of a long quarrel between him and the king.

CHAPTER X

PHILIP IV. AND BONIFACE VIII.

The Jubilee, 1300.—The Pope in the days of Philip IV. was Boniface VIII., a man eager for power, who wished to make the princes of Europe feel that he was their superior. In the year 1300 he proclaimed a year of jubilee, and said that once in every hundred years, remissions of penance should be given to those who made a pilgrimage to Rome. More than 100,000 pilgrims are said to have flocked to Rome, and filled the treasuries of the Pope with their rich offerings. Boniface felt as if there was no end to his power. He interfered with Philip IV. because he had seized and imprisoned a French bishop, and he sent Philip a long letter, or Bull, in which he pointed out all his faults, and blamed him for his way of governing, and for his taxes. Philip's chief advisers were lawyers, for the lawyers had grown to be a very important body. They tried in every way to serve the king and to add to his power, and now they advised him to resist the Pope's interference.

The Estates-General, 1302.—In the struggle with the Pope, Philip and his advisers felt that they must try to get the people on their side. They decided to call together representatives of the people, to whom the king might tell the story of his wrongs. They summoned men from each of the three estates of the



THE THREE ESTATES. (*From a thirteenth-century Missal.*)

people—the clergy, the lords, and the commons—and therefore their meeting was called the *Estates-General*. There had been no such gathering of representatives of the whole people since the days of the Carolingian kings. Even now the people did not care for the opportunity given them. The history of England is the history of the long struggle of the people to win the right of governing themselves. We find nothing like this in French history ; the people did not care about national affairs, and it was long before the love of liberty awoke amongst them.

The King's chancellor gave to the Estates his account of the Pope's conduct. The barons and the men of the third estate loudly expressed their indignation. The clergy had a more difficult part to play, for they had to try and please both Pope and king.

When the Pope heard what Philip was doing, he threatened to excommunicate him. Then Philip called the Estates together again, and this time they were persuaded to say that Boniface VIII. ought no longer to be Pope, and that a general council, chosen from all Christendom, must meet to elect a new Pope. The Chancellor, William of Nogaret, was sent to Italy to tell Boniface what Philip and his Estates had decided.

The Death of Boniface VIII., 1303.—Nogaret made friends with the Pope's enemies, and chiefly with Sciarra Colonna, the head of a great Roman family which the Pope had banished. Colonna, followed by 300 horsemen and many foot-soldiers, joined Nogaret, and they entered Anagni, a little town in the mountains near Rome, where the Pope was staying. They forced their way roughly into the presence of the Pope. Boniface was an old man of eighty-four, and when he

heard the soldiers cry outside his palace, 'Death to the Pope!' he thought his last hour was come. Seated on his throne in all his robes, with a cross in his hand, he waited for his murderers. Nogaret and Colonna called upon him to say that he was willing to be Pope no longer. But he answered bravely, 'Here is my neck; if I must die like Jesus Christ, I will at least die Pope.' Colonna is said to have torn him from his throne, and hit him in the face with his iron glove. He would have killed him, but Nogaret prevented it. They kept the Pope a prisoner, but a few days after the people of Anagni rose and saved him from their hands. The shock, however, to the old man had been too great, and he died of grief and anger.

Shortly afterwards Philip IV. managed to get a Pope chosen who would be obedient to his will. This was a Frenchman, Clement V., who was willing to escape from the troubles of Rome and come and live at Avignon, in France, under the French king's protection. There he, and the Popes after him, lived for over seventy years. This time at Avignon has been called the Babylonish captivity, because men thought that the Pope ought always to be in Rome.

Other kings had been forced to yield in their struggles with the Popes. Philip's triumph added very much to the royal power in France. The lawyers helped the king to triumph over the Church and over the nobility. The nobles cared less and less about coming to sit in the Parlement, where everything was decided by the lawyers. The Parlement was divided into three chambers, where different causes were judged. All power centred round the king and his advisers, who were all lawyers.

The Knights Templars.—Philip IV.'s chief difficulty was to get enough money. He arranged that those who did not follow him to his wars should give money, in proportion to their position, to provide soldiers. In his need of money his attention was directed to the great wealth said to be owned by the Knights Templars. This was an order of knights which had been founded to defend the Holy Land. Like monks, they vowed never to marry, and to give their lives to the service of God, but their object was to serve Him in battle against His enemies. There were very many of them, and they had grown very rich. As the Crusades were at an end, they had no special work to do, and men accused them of living wicked lives, given up to strange and sinful pleasures. We cannot now tell whether the charges against the Templars were true, but it suited Philip IV. to believe them. Early one October morning in the year 1307, all the Knights Templars in France were taken and cast into prison. Philip IV. seized their treasure, till the question of their guilt was settled. The Pope at first tried to speak up for them, but after a meeting with the king, he was obliged to give in and leave the Templars to their fate. They were kept two years in prison, and then brought to trial. They were tortured to make them confess, and pain forced many to confess crimes which they had never committed. Those who took back their confessions were condemned to death. The order was suppressed, and more than fifty of the knights were burnt. The Grand Master of the order, James de Morlay, was burnt, tied to the stake with another Templar, on a little island in the Seine. His brave death filled the people with admiration. It was commonly believed that he had prophesied

that the King would be summoned within the year before the judgment-seat of God.

Death of Philip IV., 1314.—Philip IV. persecuted the heretics as well as the Templars. He was a pious man, who led a pure life, but his cruelty and harshness made his subjects hate him. Murmurs against his taxes rose louder and louder. The last year of his reign was full of trouble and discontent, and when he died his subjects did not mourn his loss. He had done much for the greatness of the royal power in France, and perhaps it was because of what he did, that the monarchy did not quite disappear in the troublous years that were to come.

Louis X., le Hutin, 1314–1316.—Philip the Fair was succeeded by his son, Louis X., the Hutin, or the Quarrelsome. This young prince was quite willing to be guided by his uncle, Charles of Valois. Charles had a bitter hatred against the lawyers, who had managed the affairs of the kingdom under Philip the Fair. He accused them of using the public moneys for their own gain; they were cast down from their high places, and the chief minister was hanged. The nobles were set free from the strong government, which had forced them into obedience. But they soon showed how unworthy they were of power. They only wished to be left alone that they might please themselves, and had no thought for the public good.

One good act dates from this reign. Louis X., like his father, was in sore need of money, and as a means to gain some, he ordered that all serfs on the royal domains should be allowed to buy their freedom. From this time serfdom gradually diminished in France.

Louis X. died after only reigning a year and a half.

He left only one daughter, known as Jeanne of France, but a few days after his death his queen gave birth to a boy, who lived only a few days. Ever since Hugh

Capet became king of France, son had succeeded father on the throne. Now men asked if a woman could sit on the throne of France. There was no one to defend the rights of the little Jeanne, who was only six years old, and her uncle Philip had himself named king.

Philip V., le Long, 1316-1322.—Philip wished to make his right to the throne clear; so the lawyers discovered for him an old law of the Salian Franks, which said that a woman could not inherit their lands. They professed that this law ought to be applied to the crown of France, with which, of course, it had nothing to do—indeed, it was not observed anywhere. Henceforth it was known as the Salic Law, according to which no woman might reign in France.



HEAD-DRESSES FROM A WINDOW,
FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

Philip the Long was very like his father in his ideas of government. He called back the lawyers to power, and managed the finances of the land with care and severity. He did not live long, and left

only daughters, so that he was succeeded by his brother Charles.

Charles IV., 1322-1328.—The short reign of Charles is marked by nothing of importance. He too died young, without sons. People looked upon the early death of Philip the Fair and his sons, as a punishment for the destruction of the Templars. With them ended the direct line of the House of Capet, which had done so much for France and produced so many great kings. Under them, the kingdom, which had been so small and weak at the beginning, grew to be one of the first kingdoms of Europe.

HOUSE OF VALOIS.

Charles, Count of Valois, son of Philip III.

PHILIP VI., King of France, 1328-1350.

JOHN THE GOOD, 1350-1364.

HOUSE OF BURGUNDY.

HOUSE OF ORLEANS.
CHARLES V., the Wise,
1364-1380.

CHARLES VI., the Mad,
1380-1422.

Louis, Duke of Orleans,
dies 1407.

CHARLES VII.,
1422-1461.

Charles, Duke of Orleans,
dies 1467.

LOUIS XI.,
1461-1483.

LOUIS XII., King of France,
1498-1515.

CHARLES VIII.,
1483-1498.

Claude marries Francis I.

John, Count of Angoulême.

Charles, Count of Angoulême.

FRANCIS I., King of France,
1515-1547.

HENRY II.
1547-1559.

FRANCIS II.,
1559-1560.

CHARLES IX.,
1560-1574.

HENRY III.,
1574-1589.

Elizabeth, marries Philip II.
of Spain.

Margaret, marries Henry IV.

Philip the Bold,
1363-1404.

John without Fear,
1404-1419.

Philip the Good,
1419-1467.

Charles the Bold,
1467-1477.

Mary, marries Maximilien.

Philip the Fair.

Emperor CHARLES V.

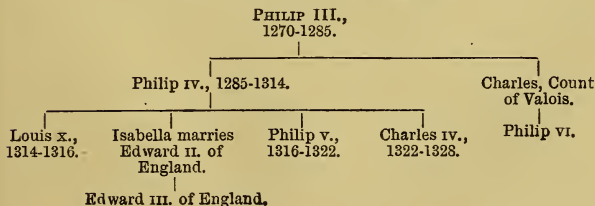
CHAPTER XI

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

Philip VI. of Valois,¹ 1328-1350. — After the death of Charles IV., the French nobles met in Paris and decided that Philip of Valois should be king. He was grandson of Philip III., the Bold, and cousin of the last three kings. All the other near relations of the royal family were women, except Edward III., king of England, whose mother was Philip IV.'s daughter. At first Edward III. made no objections to Philip of Valois being king, and did homage to him for his lands in France. But later on, as you will see, he said that he ought to be king of France himself.

Philip VI. and the Flemings.—The rich Flemish merchants had risen against their Count and driven him out of Flanders. He asked Philip VI. for help, and Philip

¹ ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF VALOIS.



called his nobles together and marched against the Flemings. He defeated them in a bloody battle, after which they were forced to take back their Count again.

As their Count was the friend of the French king, the Flemish merchants and weavers made friends with the English king. Their chief business was to weave cloth, and from England they got the wool from which to make their cloth. Wool was the great wealth of England, and it was very important for the English to find buyers for it. So it was natural that the English and the Flemings should be good friends. Flemish affairs became one of the many causes for dispute between Edward III. and Philip VI. More and more the two kings came to look upon one another as foes. It seemed clear that war must soon break out, and each side began to prepare for it. Edward III. brought forward his claim to be king of France, thinking in this way to win over the discontented subjects of Philip, especially the Flemish merchants. At last, in 1337, the war broke out, which, with short interruptions, went on for more than a hundred years between France and England.

Battle of Sluys, 1340.—Philip VI. hired some ships from the Genoese, so as to attack the English at sea. But they defeated his fleet in the battle of Sluys, and after this Philip did not try to do anything more on the sea. This battle was followed by a short truce, but soon a new cause of dispute arose.

The War in Brittany.—The Duke of Brittany had died without children, and his duchy was claimed by his niece Jeanne, and by his half-brother Jean de Montfort. Jeanne had married the Count of Blois, Philip VI.'s nephew, so Philip took her part. Then Jean

de Montfort went over to England and promised to look upon Edward III. as king of France, if Edward would help him to win Brittany. Edward gave him rich presents, and sent him away, promising to help him. During the war which followed in Brittany, Montfort was betrayed by the citizens of Nantes to the French, and taken prisoner to Paris. But this did not end the war. The Countess of Montfort had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion. She was at Vannes when she heard that her husband had been taken prisoner. Calling together all the soldiers who were there, she told them, with tears, of the treason of the men of Nantes, and she showed them her little son of seven years old, and said, 'Here is your lord,' and prayed them to fight well and loyally for him. With five hundred horsemen, she rode from castle to castle, encouraging her friends, till help came from England. Then a truce was made between the two parties.

The Gabelle.—Philip VI. was in want of money, and he made a new plan of raising it, which pressed very hardly on the poor. He ordered, that only the royal officers might buy salt from the makers. They then sold it again to the people at a very great profit. It was very hard on the poor, in those days, that salt should be dear, for all through the winter men had to live on salted meat and fish. The people suffered terribly from this tax, which was called the Gabelle, but it brought the king a great deal of money, with which he raised a splendid army.

The War with Edward III.—This great army was defeated by Edward III. at the battle of Crecy (1346), about which you read in English history, and then, after a long siege, Edward took Calais. In Brittany

Jean de Montfort's party triumphed and took Charles of Blois prisoner, so that everywhere things went badly for the French king, who was glad to make another truce with his enemies.

The Black Death.—Then a trouble worse even than war came upon the people. A plague, called the Black Death, came from Italy first to the south of France, but soon spread over the whole country. There were as many as 800 deaths a day in Paris, and men said that a third of all the people in the world perished. Some said that the Jews were the cause of the plague, and turned on them and killed them in their fury. Others said that it came from God, as a punishment for the sins of the world. In truth, men cared little about the service of God, and spent their days in amusement and feasting. The Pope with his court at Avignon set a very bad example, for he put his own pleasures before everything else; and the chief clergy did as he did. Fortunately there were some poor monks, and friars, and nuns, who did their best to help the sick and needy, and teach them about God.

Death of Philip VI., 1350.—Philip VI. did not stop his tournaments and his fêtes because his people were dying of the plague. He was a vain, silly man, and wasted in luxuries and pleasures the money his taxes brought in. When he died, he left the royal treasury empty. Though unsuccessful in war, he was clever enough to buy two new provinces for the French crown. These were Montpellier in the south, which he bought from a Spanish king; and Vienne, which he bought from its ruler, the Dauphin of Vienne, who had decided to give up the world and become a friar. Philip VI. gave Vienne to his grandson, and it was

afterwards always given to the eldest son of the reigning king, who took the title of Dauphin, which its ruler had always borne.

Jean le Bon, 1350-1364.—Philip VI. was succeeded by his son John, who was called *le Bon*, not, as we should now translate the word, the Good, but rather the easy-going, or the good-natured. He was even more extravagant and foolish than his father, and quite unable to get his country out of its difficulties.



SOLDIERS OF FOURTEENTH CENTURY.
(From *La Sainte Chapelle, Paris.*)

The people suffered almost as much when there was a truce between France and England, as when there was war. In the war there had sprung up bands of soldiers, made up of men from different nations,

who were willing to fight for any one who would hire them. These bands were called Free Companies. When they were not fighting, they wandered about the country plundering, a terror to the poor and unprotected.

Charles the Bad, King of Navarre.—There was one of the great French lords, who hoped that in this disturbed time, he might manage to make himself a great man. This was Charles, king of Navarre, who was called the Bad, on account of his evil, restless life. He was the son of Louis x.'s daughter Jeanne, and sometimes hoped that he might even win the crown of France for himself.

King John had a favourite, Charles de la Cerda, whom he loved more than any one else, and to whom he gave many rich presents. Amongst other things he gave him some lands, which ought to have belonged to Charles the Bad. Then Charles was very angry. Once when de la Cerda was passing the night in a little village in Normandy, some of Charles's servants fell upon him secretly, and killed him in his bedroom.

John was bitterly grieved at his favourite's death, and soon guessed who had caused it. At first it seemed as if there would be a great war between him and Charles, but Charles felt he was not strong enough to stand against the king, and submitted for the time. But he began to plot secretly how to help the English to invade France once more.

John captures Charles the Bad.—John was, as usual, in need of money to raise an army. He called together the Estates-General, representatives of the clergy, the nobles, and the burgesses, and asked them to get him money. They gave him what he wanted, but they were bold enough to complain loudly of his bad govern-

ment and waste of money. Once more the Gabelle, and a new tax, a hearth-tax, which each house had to pay, was levied. This caused great discontent, particularly in Normandy, where the people were not yet accustomed to pay taxes to the king of France. Charles the Bad thought that the discontent in Normandy would help his plans. He went there with a Norman baron, the Count of Harcourt, who also hated the French king, to plan how they could get the English into Normandy. John's eldest son was Duke of Normandy, and was living at Rouen. The two traitors went to see him, and pretended to be very friendly, so that he suspected nothing. But King John had guessed their plans. He came suddenly to Rouen, and walked into the hall where the princes were at supper. As he mounted the steps of the dais he drew his sword, saying, 'Let no one move whatever he may see, unless he wishes to die by this sword.' When they rose and tried to greet him, he seized hold of the king of Navarre, crying, 'Come out, traitor, you are not worthy to sit at my son's table. I will neither drink nor eat whilst you live.'

The traitors were seized by the king's followers. Harcourt was beheaded immediately. Charles of Navarre was taken to Paris and thrown into prison, where he was treated very badly, being constantly threatened with death.

Captivity of King John, 1356.—News was brought to king John that the Black Prince had marched from Bordeaux into France, pillaging far and wide. John went after him with a splendid army, but though the Black Prince had only a small band of men, he utterly defeated the French king at the battle of

Poitiers, and took him prisoner. John was taken to England; his eldest son, Charles, had fled from the battle-field at Poitiers to Paris. He found the city full of alarm and indignation because, in spite of all the money wrung from the people, and the mighty army which had been raised, the king and nobles had done nothing to give the land peace. The people were full of anger against the knights and nobles. They saw them living lives of idleness and pleasure, given up to eating and drinking, following the most ridiculous fashions in dress, spending days and nights in games and sports. The money that the people had to pay in taxes was spent on these follies, and the nobles could not even fight to free the land from the English. A handful of English had scattered their great army at Poitiers. No words, said a song of the time, could paint the vileness of the traitors who had fled, whilst their king was taken prisoner. And now more money was to be wrung from the wretched peasants, to pay the ransoms of their lords, who had been taken prisoners.

Etienne Marcel.—The Dauphin, who was only seventeen years old, a youth of feeble health and little courage, had a difficult task before him. He called the Estates-General together and found that the third estate, the citizens of the towns, came in great numbers, determined to put a stop to the evil state of affairs. They were led by Etienne Marcel, the Provost of the Merchants of Paris, and he was aided by Robert Lecoq, bishop of Laon, a man who had private causes for hating the king, and who was an old ally of the king of Navarre. Marcel hoped that, now that the royal power was so low, he might win more privileges for Paris, and more power for the Estates-General; so

that they might be able to prevent the waste of money and the bad government of the last years. At first the Dauphin could not make up his mind to agree to the demands, which were made to him by Marcel and Lecoq, in the name of the Estates. He left Paris, hoping to find other ways of getting out of his difficulties. But as he could get no help elsewhere, he was forced to return to Paris, where he found Marcel more determined than ever.

There were many consultations between the Dauphin and Marcel's party. Lecoq spoke—preached they called it then—to the Estates, telling them how in the past the king and the kingdom had been badly governed, and how the people would not suffer these things any longer. He named twenty-two of the counsellors of the king whom the Dauphin must send away, and proposed a long list of reforms. If the Dauphin agreed to these demands, then money should be granted him to raise a new army.

Charles of Navarre freed from Prison.—The Dauphin was forced to agree, though he received orders from his father not to consent to the demands of the Estates. A truce of two years was at the same time concluded with England. Lecoq wished to set free the king of Navarre, and at last succeeded in gaining over the governor of the castle, where he was imprisoned, and having him let out. He came at once to Paris, and, gathering round him an immense crowd, spoke to them of his wrongs, and of his wishes for the good of the country.

Marcel tried to make peace between the Dauphin and Charles the Bad ; but though they met and made promises to one another, there could be no friendship

between them. The Dauphin would not give up the lands and castles which Charles the Bad claimed, so Charles used the Free Companies to help him. He got them to settle round Paris, and on the borders of Normandy, so that people lived in terror, and could not travel without a safe-conduct.

Violence of Etienne Marcel, 1358.—The Dauphin, as time went on, had begun to pay little heed to the promises which he had made to the Estates; and Marcel determined to teach him a lesson. With some of his followers he went into the Dauphin's room, and there some of his company seized the Dauphin's two chief advisers and killed them in his presence, so that his clothes were bespattered with their blood. The other servants of the Dauphin fled, and he turned in terror to Marcel, asking him to save his life. Marcel told him he need not fear, and gave him his cap of red and blue, the colours of Paris, to wear, whilst he himself put on the Dauphin's cap. All day the bodies of the murdered men lay on the steps, and no one dared move them. Marcel sent to the Dauphin a roll of red and blue cloth, that he and his servants might be clothed in the colours of Paris.

It seemed as if the Dauphin was quite in Marcel's power. He had to make friends with Charles of Navarre, who came to Paris, and do just as he was told. But as soon as possible, he escaped secretly from Paris, and, when he had got to a safe place, prepared to resist Marcel and the citizens of Paris. Then Marcel, who had already done much to fortify Paris, set to work to add new towers and walls, and have great ditches dug round the city, to make it safe against attack. Just when France most needed peace it was divided against itself.

At first Marcel had seemed to be the friend of the people, but he and his party in Paris had been too selfish in their aims, and had disgusted the rest of France; so it became easier for the Dauphin to get a party round him.

The Jacquerie.—The misery of the country was terrible. The soldiers of the Free Companies alone grew rich by plundering. Many villages, which were not fortified, turned their churches into forts. Sentinels watched all night on the tower, and if they saw a robber band drawing near, they warned the people by sounding trumpets and ringing the bells. Then all the peasants hastened to take refuge in the church. The vineyards and the fields were not cultivated; on all sides blackened, smoking ruins could be seen. Yet, all the same, the heavy hand of the nobles tried to get money out of the peasants.

At last, in their despair, the peasants rose. They formed themselves into bands, and went about plundering and burning the castles of the nobles. The peasant was commonly called Jacques Bonhomme in France, and hence this rising was called the Jacquerie. The peasants wished to destroy all nobles and gentlemen in the world. In their rage and fury they did many deeds too horrible to relate. Marcel thought he would strengthen himself by helping the peasants, and sent a body of men to aid their attack on the fortress of Meaux, where many of the families of the nobles had taken refuge. But the fortress was strong, and the nobles were able to defend themselves, and utterly defeat the peasants. Then the punishment given to the poor peasants was terrible: their villages and houses were burnt, they were killed by hundreds, and in six weeks the rising was over.

Death of Etienne Marcel, 1360.—The Dauphin now thought he was strong enough to attack Paris. Marcel, who wished to gain over some of the nobles to his party, asked Charles of Navarre to aid him to defend the city, and named him Captain of Paris. Charles the Bad was not a safe friend. As soon as he saw that the Dauphin's party was getting stronger, he began to treat with him, and left Paris and went to join him. Marcel was in great difficulties. Paris was starving, the citizens were losing their trust in him. He made one more despairing effort. He wrote to Charles the Bad, promising to give Paris up to him and proclaim him king of France. Charles was quite willing; but in Paris itself many wished to make friends with the Dauphin. They discovered Marcel's plans, and the very night that he was going to let Charles the Bad in, they watched for him at the gate. When he arrived with the keys in his hands, they came out upon him, saying, 'Etienne, Etienne, what are you doing here at this hour?' Fierce words followed, and then they fell upon him and killed him there. The next morning they sent word to the Dauphin what they had done, and he was at once admitted into Paris.

Peace of Bretigny, 1360.—The two years' truce was just over, and Edward III. marched into the north of France with a great army. The Dauphin showed his wisdom by not trying to fight against the English. He simply kept out of their way, bidding the strong towns shut their gates against them. The country was so ruined, that Edward could find no food for his army, and was glad to sign the Peace of Bretigny with the Dauphin. According to this, King John was to be set free for a large ransom, and till this should be paid

one of his sons, the Duke of Anjou, was to stay in England in his place.

Release of John, 1360.—John came back to France, but he did nothing to heal the sores of his unhappy kingdom. Now that peace was signed, the captains of the Free Companies sent away their soldiers ;



COSTUME, FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

and these men, who were accustomed to live by plunder, formed themselves into small robber bands, and wandered over the land, spreading terror wherever they went. In the midst of all this misery, John held festivities and tournaments at his court. The year

after his return, the Duke of Burgundy, one of the greatest vassals of France, died without an heir, and so his duchy fell to the king. John ought to have united these rich lands to the royal domain, but he gave them to his youngest son Philip, who, as Duke of Burgundy, founded a mighty house, which was afterwards able to rival even the royal house itself. In 1364, the Duke of Anjou, who had been left as hostage for the king in England, escaped. John himself then went back to England to make up for his son's dishonourable act. Perhaps he was not sorry to escape from the miseries of France, to the comforts which he enjoyed as a royal prisoner in England. He died the same year, and his son became king as Charles v.

CHAPTER XII

CHARLES V., THE WISE

Charles V., 1364.—Charles v., who was called the Wise, was a very different man from the two first kings of the house of Valois. He was a pale, thin man, quiet and timid; he never went to war himself, and trusted more to good management than to good fighting, to get rid of his enemies. From boyhood he had to struggle with terrible difficulties, and he had learnt much from his troubles. Fortunately he had a famous soldier to help him in his wars. This was the Breton, Bertrand du Guesclin, who had grown up amidst the troubles of the Brittany War, and thence passed into the service of the king of France. He was a short ugly man—it was said there was no uglier man in Brittany—absolutely fearless, loving to fight, pitiless to the strong and powerful, but full of pity and kindness to the poor.

End of the War in Brittany.—When Charles v. became king, there was supposed to be peace between France and England, but the war in Brittany between the two rival dukes still went on, and here the English and French knights met and fought. Du Guesclin, with Charles of Blois, went to attack at Auray the army of the famous English captain John Chandos, who

was helping de Montfort. There the French were defeated, Charles of Blois was killed, and du Guesclin, whose love of fighting made him imprudent, was taken prisoner. This battle ended for a time the war of Brittany; for, as Charles of Blois was dead, Charles v. recognised Montfort as duke, and made peace with him.

The War in Spain.—Peace only added to the miseries of France, for it added to the number of Free Companies who had nothing to do. Charles v. thought that it might be possible to get them to leave France, if he took part in the wars in Spain, where there were two rivals for the throne of Castile, Peter the Cruel and his half-brother Henry of Trastamare. He ransomed Du Guesclin, and bade him lead an army into Spain to defend the cause of Henry. They tried to call this war a crusade, by speaking of the cruelties of Peter, and saying that when he was driven out, they would march against the Moors, and drive them from Spain. Du Guesclin told the soldiers of the Free Companies, that in this way they would win pardon for all their sins. On the way to Spain, he led his army to Avignon, where they received the blessing of the Pope, pardon for all their sins, and a large sum of money.

Peter the Cruel was easily driven from his throne, but he fled to the court of the Black Prince at Bordeaux and asked his help. So the Black Prince and Chandos marched into Spain, and defeated the French in the battle of Najara, where once more Du Guesclin rushed too far in his eagerness, and was taken prisoner. Then all Charles v.'s plans were upset, for the Free Companies marched back into France again and began their ravages, and there was no one to check them.

Du Guesclin did not stay long a prisoner. The Black Prince found, to his indignation, that men thought he kept Du Guesclin in prison, because he was afraid of him ; so he said he would let him go for a large ransom. Du Guesclin at once promised to pay it, and when the Prince asked how he, a poor knight, could raise so much money, he answered, 'The king of Castille will pay half, the king of France the rest, and there is not a girl in France, who knows how to spin, who will not spin for my ransom.' Such was the admiration felt for Du Guesclin that Chandos himself and the Princess of Wales gave money towards his ransom.

Death of Peter the Cruel, 1369.—The Black Prince had been obliged to leave Spain, because of the illness of his men. Du Guesclin now went again with Henry of Trastamare to attack Peter, and once more defeated him. Peter was taken prisoner and brought before Henry. Then the two brothers began to abuse one another with hard words. Words soon turned to blows. They fell on the ground struggling together, and Peter was killed.

Conquest of Aquitaine.—Whilst the Spanish wars were keeping the Free Companies busy, Charles v. had been carefully trying to weaken his enemies and strengthen himself in every way. He spent no time and wasted no money on pleasures. A little music after his dinner was his one amusement. Rich and poor could come to him and tell their wants. His great wish was to drive the English out of France. The Black Prince did not rule Aquitaine very wisely, and all who had any complaints to make against him found a ready hearing from Charles v. After his return from Spain, the Black Prince was in bad health,

and did not manage things well. People complained loudly of his taxes, and at last Charles v., as his suzerain lord, dared to bid him come and answer these complaints. The Black Prince was furious at such a command, and refused to go. Then Charles ordered his lands to be invaded. Du Guesclin, whom he named Constable, the highest military rank in France, and Oliver Clisson, another Breton captain, were bidden to conduct the war. They were careful to avoid a great battle, but they attacked the English in numberless small skirmishes, and harassed them at every step. Illness forced the Black Prince to go back to England. His place was taken by his brother John of Gaunt. But his armies were followed everywhere by Du Guesclin, who little by little drove the English further and further back, till at last they were glad to sign a truce.

Reform of the Free Companies.—During these wars Charles v. had tried to turn the Free Companies into a regular army. Many of them had perished in Spain. Of the others, Charles v. took the best captains into his service, and he insisted that all captains must have his permission to command their bands, and then he gave them wages for their soldiers. So there was more order in the land. The king was able to give some attention to learning and to art. He had a magnificent palace built for himself in Paris, called the Hôtel de St. Pol, which he adorned with pictures and statues. He added many beautiful manuscripts to the library in the Louvre. The walls of Paris were rebuilt, and the great fortress of the Bastille was begun.

Death of Du Guesclin and Charles V., 1380.—In the end of Charles v.'s reign there were

troubles in Brittany, and Du Guesclin was ordered to march against the Bretons. He could not bring himself to forget his own Breton blood and do this, so he went instead to take some places which still held out for the English in the south of France. There, whilst besieging a little fortress, the great soldier fell ill and died. The king honoured him with a splendid funeral. A few months after Charles v. himself died.

Charles VI., 1380-1422.—The new king, Charles VI., was only eleven years old ; he was a handsome, good-natured little boy, and from his childhood had shown a love for arms and the glory of a soldier's life. But he showed no signs of the wisdom and seriousness needed to make a good king. The care of Charles v. had managed to bring back some little order, and to gather a little money for the government, but he was hardly dead before his brother, the Duke of Anjou, seized his jewels and treasures and kept them for himself. The young king was entirely in the hands of his uncles. The Duke of Anjou was made regent ; the youngest uncle, the Duke of Burgundy, had the care of the king's person, and the second, the Duke of Berry, had himself made governor of the south of France. These royal princes were called the Princes of the Lilies, as the lily was the emblem that Louis VII. had chosen for the royal house. Their one desire was for money, and on all sides the people rose against their unjust and hard demands.

The Maillotins.—In the market at Paris, a poor old woman was selling water-cress, and a tax-collector came to demand from her a new tax, which was to be raised on everything sold in the market. The old woman began to scream, men gathered round her, fell upon the

tax-collector, covered him with blows and killed him. The disturbance spread, and the people armed themselves as best they could. They got hold of a number of iron mallets from the stores of the government ; they were called *maillotins* because of this strange weapon. They went all through the town, killing all the tax-collectors they could find, breaking open the prisons, and letting the prisoners go free. The princes of the Lilies were powerless to stop them, and had to yield to their wishes. A wise old lawyer, Jean de Desmarets, persuaded the government to pardon the rebels. He was old and ill, but he was carried round the town on a litter to tell the people of the king's pardon and promises.

Battle of Roosebek, 1382.—The childless Queen of Naples chose the Duke of Anjou as her heir. He took with him all the money he had been able to lay his hands on in France, and went off to try and win his kingdom, and did not return to trouble France any more. The Duke of Burgundy was now the most powerful man in France. He had married the daughter and heiress of the Count of Flanders, and took great interest in the affairs of Flanders. The citizens of Ghent and some of the chief Flemish towns had risen against their Count because of his heavy taxes. The Duke of Burgundy raised an army in France to go to the help of the Count of Flanders, and took with him the young King, who was delighted to go to war. They met the Flemish army at Roosebek, where the Flemings chained themselves together, so that all might stand firm against the French knights. So when the horsemen dashed against them they could not move, and pressed against one another. Most of them were either

stifled or killed. This victory filled the king and the Princes of the Lilies with triumph. They went back to Paris as conquerors, and ordered all the old taxes to be imposed again, and punished the leaders of the *Maillo-*tins, whom they had been obliged to pardon before. The Princes of the Lilies took this opportunity of getting rid of old Jean de Desmarets, whom they hated. He was condemned to death, after a mere pretence of a trial. When they came to behead him, they said, 'Master Jean, ask mercy of the king, that he may pardon your faults.' But he answered, 'I have served well and loyally his great-grandfather, his grandfather, and his father, and I will ask mercy of God alone ; for if the king had had the age and knowledge of a man, he would not have been guilty of such a judgment on me.' Then he bade farewell to the people, who stood weeping round him.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BURGUNDIANS AND THE ARMAGNACS

Majority of Charles VI., 1388.—For a while the king's uncles were able to rule as they liked, as the revolts of the people had been put down. But in 1388 some of the chief clergy advised the king to rule for himself. Then he dismissed his uncles, thanking them for the trouble they had taken. They went away very discontented to their own lands. Charles VI. then chose ministers from the old servants of his father. They were called the *Marmousets*, or little monkeys, by the nobles, in scorn of their low birth. They tried to bring some order into the government, but the king cared only for his pleasures, and gave them no help.

Attempted Murder of Clisson.—The man for whom Charles VI. cared most was Oliver Clisson, the soldier who had been made Constable of France. Now it chanced that a certain Peter Craon had been dismissed from the service of the court, and he thought that Clisson was the cause of his disgrace. So one night, when Clisson was coming back from court in the dark with a few servants, Craon set upon him in the streets of Paris with a body of armed men. Clisson was stabbed many times; but he fell against the door of a baker's shop, which gave way, so that he fell into the house,

and the murderers went on their way, thinking he was killed. Clisson's servants went to the help of their master, who lay bleeding from his wounds before the terrified baker. One of them rushed to tell the king what had happened, and he rose from his bed in haste to come to the Constable. The king's doctors attended to the wounded man, and in a few weeks he was able to ride again.

Madness of Charles VI.—Peter Craon took refuge with the Duke of Brittany, who refused to give him up. Charles VI. was so eager for vengeance that he determined to lead an army into Brittany. He was in bad health, and the doctors urged him to rest, but he would go, and refused to listen to any advice. As he was riding on a hot July day through the forest of Mans, a miserable-looking man, probably a mad beggar, dashed out from amongst the trees and seized the king's bridle, crying out, 'King, ride no further, but turn back, for you are betrayed!' This gave the king a great fright, and as they rode on he suffered more and more from the heat, as he was dressed in a close-fitting black velvet doublet. By chance a page let his lance fall on to the helmet of his neighbour. This second fright was too much for the king's weak head. Drawing his naked sword, he rushed forward, screaming, 'Kill these traitors!' He turned on his brother, the Duke of Orleans, who fled before him. Before he could be stopped, it is said that in his frenzy he killed four men. Then they managed to get his sword from him; but the poor king knew no one, and was hopelessly mad. He never got quite well again. There were times when his senses came back for a while, but the fits of madness always came on again. If he was well enough, he liked

to be amused by festivities and shows. Once a grand wedding was held at court, and the king, with five other men, dressed themselves up as savages in close-fitting dresses, covered with tow to look like hair. Every one was filled with astonishment at these strange figures,



STATUES FROM ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

and some one brought a torch too near to examine them, and set them on fire. Five of them were burnt to death. The king was saved because he was just then showing himself off to the ladies of the court, who covered him with their petticoats and protected him from the fire.

Louis of Orleans.—The king's madness brought worse confusion than ever into the government. The princes of the royal family drove the Marmousets out of power, but they did not agree together. The Duke of Burgundy was the most powerful, but the king's brother, Louis of Orleans, a bright, clever young man, began to make a party of his own and to resist his uncle. Many of the nobles, who were jealous of the Duke of Burgundy, joined Louis. Unfortunately he was not a wise or serious man, he loved pleasure and had no real care for the good of France. He had married a beautiful Italian lady, Valentina Visconti. She was very kind to the poor mad king, and her face and voice often soothed him when nothing else could. His own wife, Isabella of Bavaria, did not trouble herself much about him. She was very friendly with the Duke of Orleans, and managed to get plenty of money for herself and her friends, out of the royal treasury.

Death of the Duke of Burgundy.—In 1404 the great Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, died. He had not been a good friend to France, because his one object had been to make his own Burgundy great and rich. He had married the daughter and heiress of the Count of Flanders, and in this way had added the rich lands of Flanders to his duchy. Flanders was the centre of the art, trade, and manufacture of Northern Europe, and the court of the Duke of Burgundy was more magnificent and luxurious even than that of the French king.

Murder of the Duke of Orleans.—Philip the Bold was succeeded by his son Jean *sans peur*, or the Fearless. At first he did not have nearly as much influence

at the French court as Louis of Orleans and the Queen. This made him very angry. He pretended to make friends with Louis, and the two princes took the Holy Communion together, and swore love and friendship to one another. Not long afterwards, Louis of Orleans was supping with the Queen, when a messenger came and told him that the king wished to see him. As he hastily rode through the streets to the king's palace, he was suddenly set upon by eighteen armed men in a dark, narrow lane. When he cried out, hoping to save his life, 'I am the Duke of Orleans!' they answered, 'It is just you that we want.' Tearing him from his horse, they killed him with many blows.

It was clear to every one who was the cause of this murder. At first the Duke of Burgundy tried to deny it, but he soon thought it wise to flee to his own lands, and then he boldly confessed that the Duke of Orleans had been killed by his orders. He got a monk to preach sermons to defend the murder, by accusing the Duke of Orleans of all kinds of horrible crimes. The friends of Orleans longed for revenge, and the widowed duchess tried to stir up men to punish the murderer of her husband. The chief man in her party was the Count of Armagnac, whose daughter had married the son of Louis of Orleans. After him the friends of the house of Orleans were called Armagnacs. The whole land was torn by the struggles between the two parties. There was no one able to bring back order and good government. The Queen was despised by all parties, and the dauphin, with no one to guide him, spent his life in silly and often sinful pleasures. The Burgundians and Armagnacs hated one another so much, that each in turn asked for the help of the English against the others.

There was constant fighting, and first one side and then the other seemed to have the upper hand.

The Cabochiens.—The people of Paris had always liked the Duke of Burgundy, and he was glad to make friends with the common people in the city. They had as their leader a man called Caboche, a butcher, and his party were called after him the Cabochiens. Many of them were butchers too, and were very rough men, used to the sight of blood. Those were terrible days in Paris, for the Cabochiens killed and plundered all whom they looked upon as their enemies, and the Duke of Burgundy with their help had many of his enemies put to death. Some of the chief men in the University, who really wished for the good of the people, tried to lead the Cabochiens into wiser ways. The States-General was summoned to meet in Paris, and drew up an ordinance for the reform of the land. But though there were men wise enough to see what ought to be done, there was no one strong enough to carry out the reforms. In time Paris grew tired of the violence of the Cabochiens; the Duke of Burgundy left the city and fled for safety to his own lands, whilst the Armagnacs entered Paris.

Invasion of Henry V., 1414.—Meanwhile a new trouble was preparing for the unhappy land. In England, Henry v. had just come to the throne; he decided to take advantage of the troubled condition of France, and landed in Normandy with an army. He marched through the north of France, plundering as he went. The leaders of the two French parties were at first too busy with their own quarrels to pay any heed to him. The Duke of Burgundy kept quiet, because he hoped that his foes would be harmed by the English invasion.

It was the lords of the Orleanist party at last, who quickly got an army together, and marched against Henry v.

Battle of Agincourt, 1415.—The two armies met at Agincourt; the French had six times as many men as the English, but they were drawn up in such a narrow space that their numbers were useless, and they could not resist the terrible flight of arrows shot by the English archers. The ground was soft and muddy after heavy rain, and the horses stumbled and fell in the mud, and soon the French army was in confusion. Many of their nobles were killed, others were taken prisoners. Amongst the prisoners was the king's nephew, the young Duke of Orleans, who was kept for thirty years a prisoner in England, where he spent his time in writing verses, deploring his sad fate.

The Armagnacs in Paris.—The Armagnacs feared that this defeat would ruin their party. They persuaded the poor mad king to come to Paris and name the Count of Armagnac, Constable of France. The Constable made himself master of Paris, but his rule was cruel and harsh. During these sad days the two eldest sons of the king both died in Paris, and the remaining son, the Dauphin Charles, was only fourteen, so the Constable had no one to interfere with him. When the Duke of Burgundy learnt how Paris hated the cruel rule of the Armagnacs, he came to France once more as the friend of the people. The Queen made friends with him, out of hatred to her young son, the Dauphin Charles, because he had blamed her for her evil life.

The Burgundian party roused the Cabochiens in Paris again. They showed all their old fury. The Count of Armagnac and as many as two thousand of his party were killed. The Dauphin managed to escape

unhurt, and the mad king was marched about the streets by the Cabochiens, so that they might pretend that he was pleased with their doings. Famine and pestilence added to the miseries of the unhappy land, whilst Henry v. continued his successes and took Rouen.

Murder of the Duke of Burgundy, 1419.—In the hope of making peace, a meeting was arranged between the Duke of Burgundy and the Dauphin at Montereau. The two princes, each accompanied by a few followers, met in the middle of a bridge, which there crosses the Seine. After a few words, one of the Dauphin's followers fell upon the Duke of Burgundy and killed him. So the murder of the Duke of Orleans was avenged. But this murder did little good to the Armagnacs. The Duke of Burgundy's son, Philip, succeeded his father, and in his desire for vengeance, made friends with the English.

The Treaty of Troyes, 1420.—Queen Isabella, to satisfy her hatred for the Dauphin, agreed to treat with the English, and persuaded the poor king to sign the shameful treaty of Troyes with Henry v. By this it was agreed that Henry v. should marry Charles vi.'s daughter Catharine, and that when Charles vi. died, Henry v. and not the Dauphin should succeed him as king of France. The Burgundians and the English now proceeded to attack together the places which held out for the Dauphin. Henry v. and the Duke of Burgundy entered Paris with Charles vi. They rode through the streets in solemn procession, and together offered up prayers in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. But Henry v. soon found that France would not submit easily to him, and many places held out bravely for the Dauphin.

Henry was not hopeful about the future. It is said that, whilst he was busy with the siege of Meaux, messengers came to tell him that his young French Queen had given birth to a son at Winchester. He answered sadly: 'Henry of Monmouth will have reigned a short while and conquered much; Henry of Winchester will reign long and lose everything.' Five months afterwards the great King of England died, and soon after him the poor mad King of France. The people had loved Charles VI. through pity for his misfortunes, and wept for his death, crying, 'Never shall we have again so good a king.'

CHAPTER XIV

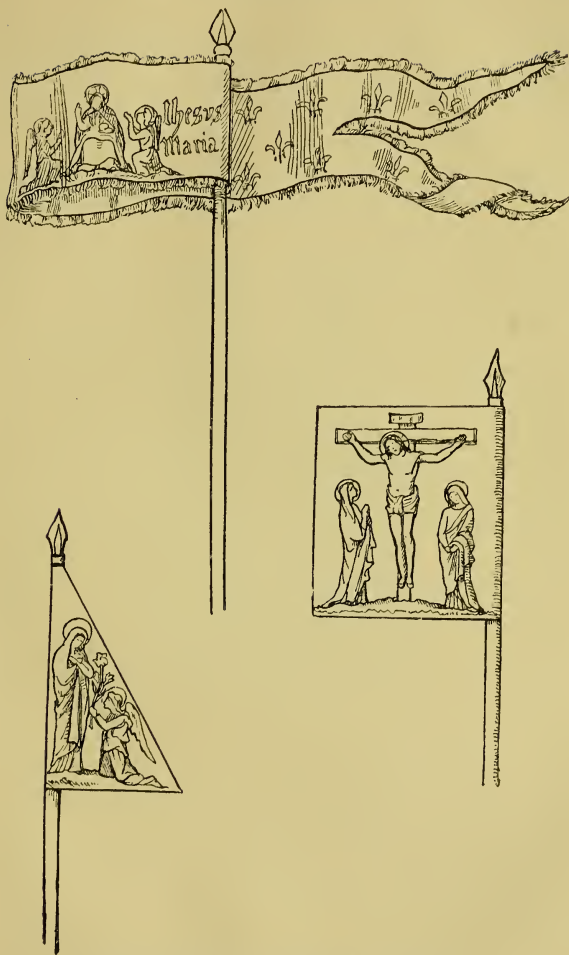
JEANNE DARC

Charles VII., 1422-1461.—At Paris the little baby prince, Henry of Winchester, was proclaimed king on the death of Charles VI., and his uncle, the Duke of Bedford, was named regent. But in the country the Dauphin was proclaimed as Charles VII. He was only twenty years old; timid and delicate, he seemed not to have courage and energy to struggle against his difficulties. Most of France south of the Loire recognised him as king, and he made his court at Bourges, from which the English, in mockery, called him king of Bourges. He had hardly enough money for his own wants, and nothing with which to pay an army. A few bands of mercenary soldiers were ready to fight for him, but their plundering habits only added to the miseries of the land. Charles VII. seemed to despair, and to give up all attempts to do anything for his people.

Siege of Orleans.—The English, after winning several small victories, laid siege to Orleans. It commanded the passage of the Loire; and if Charles VII. lost it, his enemies would be able to make their way into the lands which he still held. The bravest English soldiers took part in the siege. The men of Orleans, though their king sent them no help, resisted with

great courage. The English built towers round the city, from which they attacked the walls. However, they could not succeed in forcing their way in, and provisions began to fail them. Sir John Falstaff was ordered to convey, under the charge of a few soldiers, a long train of baggage-wagons with food for the English. The French determined to stop him; but when he knew that he was going to be attacked, he arranged the wagons so as to protect his archers, and waited for the French. The horsemen expected to carry all before them, but they dashed themselves in vain against the wall of wagons, and were cut down by the arrows. Soon they were driven to flight on all sides, and the provisions were taken safely to the English troops, who received them with great rejoicing. This was called 'The day of the herrings,' because many of the wagons were laden with herrings for the Lenten fast. The French, covered with shame, seemed to have lost all courage, and the young king, in his court at Chinon on the Loire, remained helpless and hopeless in his despair.

Jeanne Darc raises the Siege of Orleans.— Suddenly he was told that a maiden, Jeanne Dare, had come all the way from Domremy, a village in Lorraine, bidden, as she said, by heavenly voices, to save France. At first they would not let Jeanne come near the king, but at last she was admitted to his presence. They did not tell her which was the king; but she at once went straight up to him and saluted him, and men took this as a sign of her divine mission. She told Charles that the voices which she had heard, whilst keeping her sheep in the fields, had bidden her come and raise the siege of Orleans and lead the king to be crowned at Rheims.



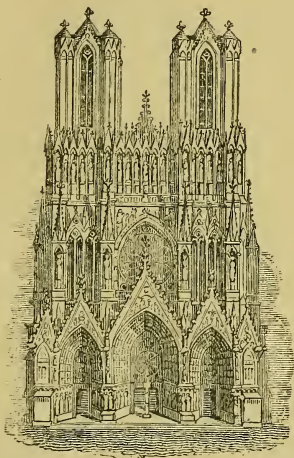
STANDARD, BANNER, AND PENNON OF JEANNE DARC.

She asked that men might be put under her command, so that she might drive away the English from before Orleans. After much discussion, it was decided that she should be allowed to do as she wished. Her presence amongst the soldiers soon changed the temper of the French. She gave them courage; she gave them faith; she made them ashamed of their cowardliness and of their evil life. Once more there was order and good conduct in the camp. Jeanne had a banner embroidered only with the names Jesus and Mary. With the banner borne before her, clothed in white armour, she forced her way through the besieging English into Orleans. There her presence brought new courage. She led an attack against the English towers. The English soldiers thought she was a witch, and fled before her. Jeanne herself never shed blood, but the sight of her made her countrymen fight like lions, and the English were forced to raise the siege and go away from before Orleans. Then Jeanne entered Orleans in triumph, and went first to thank God in the cathedral.

Charles VII. is crowned at Rheims.—After this she wished at once to march upon Rheims. Unfortunately there was division amongst the king's advisers. Dunois, one of his bravest knights, was eager to help Jeanne in all her plans; but another courtier, la Trémouille, tried to oppose her, as he was jealous of her influence. However, at last they started, and on the way to Rheims one place after another was won from the enemy. Amongst all the rough soldiers Jeanne remained simple and modest, and all were forced to respect her. Rheims opened its gates to the king, and there he was solemnly crowned in the cathedral, as his forefathers had been before him.

Jeanne stood beside the altar, weeping for joy, with her standard in her hand.

Jeanne is taken Prisoner.—Some say that after this, Jeanne begged to be allowed to go home to Domremy, but the king insisted on her staying with the army. An attempt was made to besiege Paris; but it failed, and Jeanne was wounded, and lay helpless in



RHEIMS CATHEDRAL.

a ditch for some hours. Shortly afterwards she went to Compiègne to defend it against the attacks of the Duke of Burgundy, and there she fell into the hands of the Burgundians, who gave her over as a prisoner to the English. They looked upon her as the cause of all the reverses that had befallen them, and were eager to be revenged upon her. She was brought to trial as a sorceress.

The Trial of Jeanne Darc.—The simple peasant girl of nineteen was questioned by a number of clever men, whose one desire was to lead her to say something with which they could find fault. She said that her voices gave her courage, and told her how to answer. She was so brave and steadfast, that they could convict her of nothing. All her answers showed that faith in God alone had given her courage. ‘I would rather have been torn in pieces by wild horses,’ she said, ‘than come to France without God’s permission.’ But they vexed and confused her so by their questions, that at last she owned that it might have been possible that her voices had deceived her, and she promised never to wear men’s clothes again. Then they condemned her to be imprisoned for her life.

Jeanne is burnt at Rouen, 1431.—But as long as she was alive, the English were afraid of her. One day they left her only men’s clothes in her cell; she was forced to put them on. Then they accused her of having broken her promise. Her indignation broke out, and, full of courage, she said once more that she had been sent by God, and guided in all things by holy voices. The English said that she had fallen back into her errors, and must perish before she led others astray, and she was condemned to be burnt at the stake. On the market-place at Rouen a great crowd gathered to see her die. First a sermon was preached by a member of the University of Paris, to declare why she was condemned. Then Jeanne threw herself on her knees in prayer, and called to those who stood around to pray with her. She begged for a crucifix, and an English soldier gave her a rude wooden cross, which he had made with a stick. But a kind

priest managed at last to have a crucifix brought to her from a neighbouring church. At last the soldiers grew impatient of her prayers. They seized her and dragged her to the executioner, bidding him do his duty. When she was placed on the top of the fagots,



JEANNE DARC.

(From a Portrait in the Museum at Orleans, dated 1581.)

and looked around at the town and the crowd, she said: 'O Rouen, I fear me much that you will have to suffer for my death.' A priest stood by her side, exhorting her to confess her sins; but when the fire was brought, she bade him go down lest he should be hurt. As the flames mounted she was heard to cry

for water. Then she called on God and the saints, and at last there came a cry of triumph: 'Yes, my voices were from God; my voices have not deceived me!' At last her head fell, and with one cry, 'Jesus,' her spirit passed away. All who stood around wept. One fierce soldier, who had sworn to add a fagot to the pile, screamed with terror, saying, 'With her last sigh I saw a dove fly from her mouth;' and a servant of the English king went away saying, 'We are lost: we have burnt a saint.'

The Treaty of Arras, 1435.—This cruel deed did not bring back luck to the English and Burgundian party. The French General Dunois and the Constable Richemont carried on the war with vigour, whilst the Burgundians began to grow tired of their alliance with the English. Richemont succeeded in making a treaty with the Duke of Burgundy, who, in return for various lands and towns, gave up the English alliance, and signed the treaty of Arras. The conditions of the peace were hard for the French king, but in return he was at once received into Paris by the Burgundians. The people of Paris did not give him a warm welcome, and Charles VII. never spent much time there.

The Taille, 1439.—He was a very different man now from what he had been when Jeanne Darc came to him at Chinon. His soldiers were, step by step, winning back his land from the English, whilst he, filled with new hope and energy, gave his mind to bringing back order and good government into the distracted country. He gathered together the Estates-General at Orleans to consider what could be done to free the country from the wandering bands of soldiers, who were little better than robbers. The Constable

Richemont helped him to frame rules for the management of the soldiers. It was decided, that no bands of soldiers should be allowed to exist, except those who had a commission from the king. A regular tax, called the 'taille,' was ordered to be raised from the peasants and burgesses to pay for the king's army. The nobles did not have to pay, since it was supposed that they gave their services instead of money. This 'taille' continued for ever afterwards to be raised by the French kings. It took, of course, some time to get rid of the Free Companies, but little by little they were put down, and the regular army was properly organised.

Jacques Cœur.—Charles VII. managed his money affairs with great care. He was helped by Jacques Cœur, a rich merchant, whose skill kept the royal treasuries full. Cœur had opened up the trade with the East, whither he sent many ships laden with cloth, which brought back in return precious silks and spices from Egypt and the Levant. He was so rich that he often lent Charles large sums of money for his wars. But in the end the king was ungrateful to him. He listened to the stories the nobles told against the rich merchant, of whom they were jealous, and had him brought to trial and imprisoned. Cœur escaped, and lived and died an exile in Italy.

The nobles were discontented at the strictness of the king's government, and the Dauphin Louis joined with them in their discontent, which grew into an open revolt. Richemont put it down, but the king and the Dauphin were never friends afterwards.

Conquest of Guienne, 1453.—Things went worse and worse for the English. The Duke of Bedford was

dead and there was no one to take his place. At last a truce was signed between France and England, and Henry VI. married Margaret of Anjou, the niece of Charles VII. The English did not like this truce, and soon the war broke out again. Then Richemont chased the English out of Normandy, and Dunois conquered Guienne; so that at last nothing was left to the English but Calais, of all their vast possessions in France, and the Hundred Years' War was ended. The English kings did not give up their claim to France, but they were too busy with troubles at home to make any serious attempts at conquest.

The Dauphin Louis.—The French nobles continued very uneasy under the firm rule of Charles VII. The Duke of Burgundy was always ready to listen to their discontent, and some of them were even base enough to offer help to the English. But Charles VII. was too strong for them. He put them down with a firm hand, and made every one feel that he was their master. He laid the foundations of absolute monarchy in France. His son was to finish the work that he began; but, as long as his father lived, the Dauphin Louis tried to go against him in every possible way. Charles hated his son, and suspected him of many evil deeds. At last Louis fled to the court of the Duke of Burgundy, where he was kindly received. It was said that he gave such a heartrending account of his wrongs that the Duke and Duchess were melted to tears. Charles VII., when he heard how the Duke had welcomed his son, exclaimed, 'He has received a fox, who will steal his chickens.'

Death of Charles VII.—These troubles made Charles VII.'s last years bitter. He died in 1461, and

it is said that through fear of being poisoned he allowed himself to die of hunger.

Beginning of Modern History.—In his reign the middle ages come to an end, and what is called modern history begins. Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453, and thus ended all the aspirations of the middle ages to destroy the power of the Moslem. Printing was invented about 1440, and made the spread of learning amongst the people possible. The movement called the Renaissance, which took men back to the study of the great Greek and Latin writers, was beginning in Italy, and was soon to spread over the rest of Europe.

CHAPTER XV

LOUIS XI.

Louis XI., 1461-1483.—As soon as news came of the death of Charles VII., the Duke of Burgundy got ready to conduct the Dauphin into France. The Burgundian court was very splendid, and the soldiers and the nobles who were to accompany the new king were decked out with gold and precious stones, whilst trains of carts followed them, carrying gold and silver plate and wine.

In the splendid crowd the real prince seemed to be the great Duke. The king was simply, even poorly dressed, and behaved as if he was the humble servant of his great protector. He was crowned in Rheims as Louis XI., and then he entered Paris with the Duke. He was willing to promise anything that the Duke asked, but he only felt himself really king when Philip had gone home again.

Character of Louis XI.—Louis XI. found his kingdom at peace, but the great lords, many of them relations of the royal family, were only waiting for a chance to show their independence. Louis's reign was to be one long struggle with them. He had no friends amongst the nobles, for he distrusted them all. He chose as his confidential servants men of no position,

who owed everything to him, chief amongst whom was Olivier le Daim, his barber, and Tristan l'Hermite, the leader of a special police force. Louis XI. always tried to get his way by craft, rather than by open struggles. He would promise anything that was needed, and then would break the most sacred promises. But he knew quite clearly what he wanted; he worked steadily for his ends, and his great cleverness won him success.

League of the Public Good.—At first Louis XI. tried to get his own way too quickly, and so raised up enemies on every side. The nobles saw their chance, and pretending to be the friends of the people, formed what they called the League of the Public Good. The leading spirit in this league was Charles the Bold, Count of Charolais, the Duke of Burgundy's eldest son, who hated Louis. The nobles of the League made ready to march on Paris. Louis XI. believed that if he could get to Paris first he would be saved. Charles the Bold barred the way against him at Montlhéry. Louis XI. forced his way past, allowing Charles to beat a part of his army and celebrate his victory. Meanwhile Louis XI. was in Paris. He spoke fair words to the citizens and to the University, and then went off to gain friends in Normandy. Soon he began to treat with his enemies. He gave something to every one. His brother, who had been a member of the League, was made Duke of Normandy; it seemed as if Louis was ready to do anything his enemies wanted.

Death of the Duke of Burgundy, 1467.—Shortly afterwards the old Duke of Burgundy died, and was succeeded by his son, Charles the Bold. He was a violent and passionate man, and had many difficulties at home. One of his cities, Liège, revolted, and

whilst he was busy settling his own troubles, Louis XI. seized the opportunity to break some of his promises. He took away Normandy from his brother, and forced the Duke of Brittany to submit to him.

Louis XI. goes to Péronne.—Charles the Bold was mad with fury when he heard of this, more particularly as he suspected that Louis XI. had encouraged the people of Liége to revolt. He sent most insolent messages to the king, and it seemed as if war must break out. Louis XI. believed that he was clever enough to gain over any one by his words, and he decided to go and visit Charles in person. Followed only by a few men, he went to Péronne, where he met the Duke.

Péronne was a border fort belonging to Burgundy. At first Charles received Louis as a friend, but soon after his coming news arrived from Liége of a new rising of the citizens, and from what the Duke heard, it seemed as if they had been encouraged by Louis. Charles fell into one of his fits of wild rage. He ordered the gates of the town to be shut, and Louis was kept as a prisoner in a gloomy little tower in the castle. For three days it was uncertain what would be done with him, and the Duke spoke loudly of making an end of the traitor. Louis was very much frightened; but he used every chance he got to make friends among the Duke's people. He made promises, and gave away money right and left. One of the most trusted servants of the Duke, Philippe de Comines, saw what a mistake it would be for the Duke to do the king any injury. He has left us an account of what happened.

He says that the third night he spent in the Duke's room, and that the Duke, as was his habit when

troubled, never undressed, but threw himself two or three times on his bed, and then jumped up again and paced the room. His anger was greater than ever, and he broke out into furious threats as Comines walked by his side. But at last he decided on the conditions which he would offer Louis, and went off suddenly to tell them to the king himself. Some one, perhaps Comines himself, was able to warn Louis of the danger he would run, if he refused Charles's conditions. When the Duke, in a voice still trembling with anger, had made his proposals, Louis agreed to everything. The Duke called for his most precious relic, a piece of the true cross, and on that they swore peace. Then the bells of the town rang out, and every one was delighted.

Louis was bitterly humbled. He had to go with Charles to punish the revolted citizens of Liège, whom he had promised to help. Then he was allowed to go back to Paris. He felt that this rash visit to the Duke had covered him with ridicule. It is said that the citizens of Paris mocked at him, and taught their tame magpies to cry Péronne as he passed. In his rage he revenged himself on one of his followers, the Cardinal La Balue, who had advised him to go to Péronne, and who, as he now found out, had sold his secrets to Charles. The unhappy Cardinal was imprisoned in an iron cage for ten years; he had himself invented this horrible way of punishing criminals.

The Duke of Burgundy invades France.—As soon as he was free, Louis XI. did not trouble to keep the promises he had made when in fear of his life. He had said that he would give his brother the earldom of Champagne, instead of which he gave him

Guienne, so as to keep him at a distance from Burgundy. Then Charles, furious that the treaty of Péronne was not kept, made a new league against the king, which he persuaded the Duke of Guienne to join. But just as the war was about to break out, the Duke of Guienne died suddenly, and Charles loudly accused the king of having poisoned his brother. He swore to punish Louis, and entered France with an army, burning and plundering every place he came to. When he reached Beauvais, he was unable to take the town, for the citizens made such a brave defence. The women turned out to help the men, and one of them, named Jeanne, like the Maid of Orleans, seized a standard, which a Burgundian soldier had already planted on the walls. She carried a little hatchet to strike down her enemies, and was from this nicknamed Jeanne Hachette.

Charles, after doing much harm to France, returned home, and for some time was prevented from attacking Louis XI. by other plans. He wanted to make his duchy into a kingdom, and to add to his lands on the east and the south. Meanwhile he persuaded Edward IV., king of England, whose sister he had married, to invade Normandy. Louis XI. always liked words better than blows, and so, instead of fighting with Edward IV., he first gained over the English nobles by rich presents, and then made a treaty in which he promised the king a large sum of money if he would return to England.

Louis XI. and his Nobles.—Now that Louis was sure of peace, he was free to punish the great nobles, who for years had joined in plotting against him. Till now Louis had always forgiven them, and pretended to receive them into favour again, but at

last he was strong enough to punish them, and teach them a lesson for the future. One after another the great nobles were brought up for trial. Two were imprisoned for life, two others were condemned to death and executed. Another, the head of the great Armagnac family, and one of the worst men of his time, was attacked in his own town and killed whilst defending it. Some even of the great nobles were imprisoned in horrible iron cages and put to torture. In many cases these nobles doubtless deserved punishment, as they had been willing to make friends for their own advantage, with the enemies of their king and their country. Louis XI., by putting down these nobles, made his kingdom really one, and brought order into the government, whilst he strengthened the royal power.

Death of Charles of Burgundy, 1477.—Whilst Louis XI. was steadily growing stronger, his great enemy, Charles the Bold, had failed in all his hopes and plans. He had a quarrel with the Swiss, and to punish them he got ready a splendid army and invaded their land. The Swiss had no fine nobles, and no grand horse-soldiers. On foot, armed with long pikes, the hardy mountaineers awaited the attack of the Burgundians. But they fought as men fight who love their country and their liberty, and in two great battles defeated Charles and his fine soldiers. Then when Charles was besieging a town in the winter he was killed, and his body was with difficulty found amongst the snow.

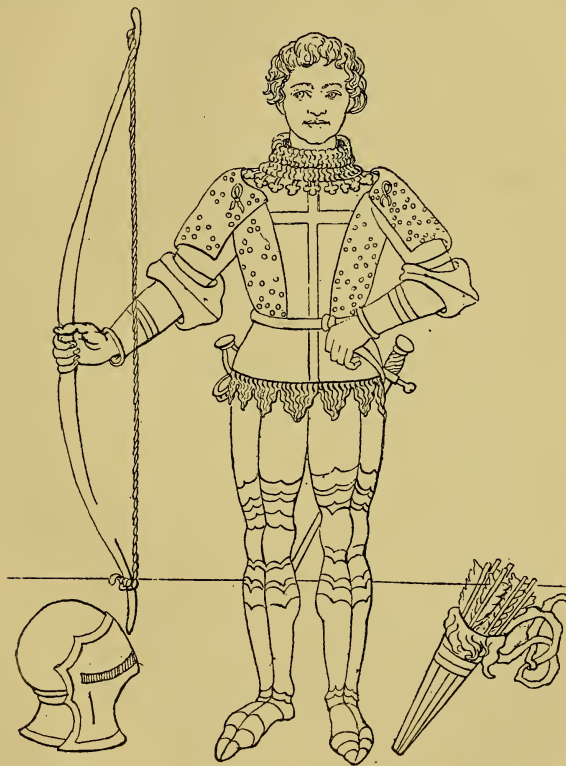
Charles only left one child, a daughter, Mary, the greatest heiress in Europe. She was Louis XI.'s god-daughter, and he pretended to be full of affection for

her. However, he at once occupied the towns on the Somme, the border cities of Flanders, and the provinces of Burgundy and Artois, with his soldiers, and encouraged the Flemings to rise against Mary. She felt that she needed a truer friend than her godfather, and married Maximilian, the Archduke of Austria, a marriage which had been arranged by her father. Maximilian at once made war on Louis XI., and defeated his troops at the battle of Guinegate. Soon afterwards a congress was held at Arras to settle the terms of peace, and once more Louis XI. showed his cleverness: he managed to keep the lands he had seized, and even to get more, as a dowry for the infant daughter of Mary and Maximilian, who was betrothed to Louis's son, the Dauphin Charles.

Louis added also Provence, Anjou, and Maine to the royal lands, when their rulers died without heirs.

Louis XI.'s way of life.—As he grew more powerful, Louis did not grow less suspicious. He lived chiefly in his castle of Plessis les Tours, near Tours. This he had had strongly fortified, and it was always guarded by a body of Scottish archers, in whom he put more trust than in his own servants. His court was sad and gloomy; no one was allowed to go freely out and in; every one lived in terror of offending the king. Louis was devout in his observation of his religious duties, and wore on his hat a number of leaden images of his favourite saints, to whom he would address his prayers in moments of difficulty. When illness warned him that his life was drawing to an end, he was full of fear. By pilgrimages and special prayers, he tried to lengthen his life. He was so thin that he looked more like a dead than a living man.

At last he was forced to resign himself to die. He called the Dauphin to him, gave him much good advice, and then, having received the last sacraments, he died in 1483.



GUILLEAUME DE MAY, CAPTAIN OF THE KING'S ARCHERS, A.D. 1480.

CHAPTER XVI

CHARLES VIII.

Charles VIII., 1483-1498.—Louis XI.'s son Charles, the youngest of his children, was only thirteen when his father died. He was an ugly, stupid boy, with a big head, a short neck, and a heavy body supported on thin legs. From his birth his health had been delicate; he had been brought up quietly at Amboise, and allowed to learn very little, so that his brain might not be tired. As Louis XI. knew that his son was as yet quite unfit to reign, he had said that he wished his daughter Anne to govern for him. Anne had married the Sire of Beaujeu; she had much of her father's cleverness, and Louis XI. said of her that 'she was the least foolish woman in the world, since wise women there were none.'

Regency of Anne of Beaujeu.—The nobles rejoiced to be free from the strong hand of Louis XI. Their leader was the young Duke of Orleans, son of that duke who had so long been prisoner in England; he had married Louis XI.'s daughter Jeanne, and by birth he was next heir to the throne after Charles VIII. Anne gave way to the wishes of the discontented nobles. She allowed the barber, Oliver, to be hung, and she called the States-General to meet at Tours in 1484;

but she got many deputies chosen who were on her side and against the party of the nobles. In this assembly could be seen, how much Louis XI. had done to destroy the power of the nobility ; for all parties sat together without distinction of rank. Anne promised everything they wanted, and sent them away. But she did not mean to keep her promises. Louis of Orleans and the Duke of Brittany now made war on her, with the pretence of freeing the young king from the tyranny of his sister. Anne sent La Trémouille, a clever general, to lead an army into Brittany, and he defeated the princes and took Louis of Orleans prisoner. The Duke of Brittany had to make peace, and died the next year, leaving his duchy to his only daughter Anne. At once many came forward to ask for Anne's hand in marriage. Anne of Beaujeu was determined that she should wed the king of France, but she herself was not willing, and wished to choose some one else. As Anne of Beaujeu could not win her by fair words, she set to work to win her by force, and La Trémouille was again sent with an army into Brittany. The French princes all felt how wise it would be to add Brittany to France, by means of this marriage. Louis of Orleans made peace with the Regent, and was allowed to go free, and he did his best to get Anne to agree to marry the king. Her own Bretons gave her the same advice, and at last she yielded. She was married to Charles VIII. in Brittany, and then went to Paris, where she was solemnly crowned. Thus the great fief of Brittany was united to the crown.

When this matter was so well settled, Anne of Beaujeu felt that her task was over, and she left off taking any share in the government. Charles VIII. was

now twenty. He seems to have cared very much about amusing himself, but he longed to gain glory by some brilliant deed.

The Italian Expedition.—You will remember how in the reign of St. Louis, his brother, the Duke of Anjou, tried to win the kingdom of Naples. Since those days the house of Anjou had always claimed Naples, and made several expeditions to win it. The French knights liked these expeditions, for Italy was a rich country, where life was much gayer than in France, and where splendid prizes might be won. Louis XI. had been tempted by the thought of the riches of Italy, and had persuaded the house of Anjou to give up their claims to him. Now Charles VIII. decided himself to go and make good his claim on Naples, and win glory and riches there.

Italy was divided into lands ruled over by different princes, who were often at war with one another. There was at that time a very wicked Pope, Alexander VI. He had no care for the Church, but plotted to win lands for his own relations. Another wicked man, Ludovico il Moro, was trying to get for himself the Duchy of Milan, which really belonged to his nephew. He made offers of friendship to the French king, in hopes that Charles would help him against his enemies. The Pope also at first encouraged Charles, who talked of going on from Italy to lead a Crusade against the Turks.

Charles VIII. enters Italy, 1494.—Charles VIII. first made peace with his enemies near home. He had been at war both with Henry VII. of England and the Emperor Maximilian. Then he got together a most splendid army, and marched with it into Italy. There

was no one there able to resist him, his march was like a triumphal progress, and the cities opened their gates to him. At Florence, a great preacher, Savonarola, who had long tried to rouse the city to a sense of its sinfulness, welcomed him as a deliverer, sent by God to free the people from their wicked rulers. The Pope hoped to keep him out of Rome, but was forced to receive him and make a treaty with him. In Naples, a king was reigning who was of Spanish race; he fled at the approach of the French, and Charles VIII. entered the city in triumph. There he and his nobles gave themselves up to pleasure, and each tried to get as much plunder as he could. No steps were taken to make their conquest secure, and after a while they began to tire of Naples, and to wish to go home and show off the riches they had won. Meanwhile, the Italians had grown very tired of them, for the French seemed very rough and rude to the polished Italians. Ludovico il Moro, who had secretly poisoned his nephew, and was now Duke of Milan, wished to get rid of the troublesome guests whom he had invited. Comines, the wisest adviser of Charles VIII., who had been Louis XI.'s secretary, had been sent to Venice on an embassy. He now came to Naples to warn the king to go home as soon as possible, for the Italian princes were forming a league against him.

Charles leaves Italy, 1495.—Charles was quite willing to go. Some soldiers were left to keep the strong places in Naples, and the king and his army set off quickly for France with all their rich booty. At Fornova, a place to the south of the river Po, he came upon the army of the allied Italians. The French had not a skilful general, but the fury of their attack, and

the bravery of the Swiss troops in Charles VIII.'s pay, were too much for the Italians, who were not accustomed to such furious and bloody fighting. Charles VIII. did not try to win a battle, he only forced his way past the Italians. His army was in want of supplies, and he had to hasten home, so that his return was really a retreat. The troops he had left behind in Naples were soon forced to surrender, and no result remained of this great expedition. But the French did not forget the glories of Italy. The sights they had seen, and the treasures they had brought back, gave them a new love for art of all kinds, and led to much greater luxury in French ways of living. Charles VIII. had his castle at Amboise on the Loire rebuilt, and adorned by artists, whom he brought from Italy. It was here that, two years after his return, he met his death. He was going to watch a game of paume or tennis, the favourite game of the French, in one of the castle ditches. To get there he had to pass through a dark low passage. Its door was so low, that he knocked his head as he passed under it. He thought nothing of the blow at the time, but as he was watching the game, he suddenly fell backwards in a fit, and died on a bed of straw before he could be taken to his room.

CHAPTER XVII

LOUIS XII.

Louis XII., 1498-1515.—Charles VIII. left no children, and he was succeeded by his cousin, Louis of Orleans. As a young man, Louis had been very fond of pleasure, and, as leader of the young nobles, had given a great deal of trouble to Anne of Beaujeu. But he became more serious when he was king himself, and tried to make his kingdom well-ordered and prosperous. His chief adviser was George of Amboise, the Archbishop of Rouen, who helped him to manage his finances wisely, so that the taxes might not be too heavy, and to improve the laws and the law-courts.

Louis XII., marries Anne of Brittany.—By the death of Charles VIII. Brittany was once more separated from the crown of France. Anne went back to her duchy, but she had promised on her marriage with Charles VIII. that, if she were left a widow, she would marry no one but the heir to the crown. Louis XII. was already married to Jeanne, daughter of Louis XI., a sweet and patient lady; but her husband had never loved her, for he had been forced to marry her as a child, and she was ugly and deformed. The Pope, who was anxious to gain his friendship, now allowed him to put away Jeanne, who ended her days in a convent, and he then married Anne of Brittany.

Louis XII. claims the Duchy of Milan, 1499.—When he had put things in order at home, Louis began to get ready to carry out the great wish of his life—an expedition into Italy. The French looked upon Italy as a promised land, and were impatient to return there. Louis, through Valentina Visconti, daughter of the Duke of Milan, who had married his grandfather, claimed to be heir of the duchy of Milan. The powerful city of Venice, the queen of the sea, and the Pope were willing to let him conquer Milan, because of the hatred they bore to Ludovico il Moro; and Louis XII. promised in return to help them in their plans. He sent his army across the Alps, and Ludovico il Moro could get no soldiers to fight against it, so that when Louis XII. arrived shortly after his army, he found that Milan was his without any fighting.

He entered the town in ducal dress, and the people, weary of the tyranny of Ludovico, received him as a saviour. Louis was very gracious to his new subjects, and spent a few weeks in Milan, showering benefits on all sides. Then he returned to France, leaving a Milanese nobleman to govern in his name. Ludovico il Moro had fled across the Alps, but he soon returned, and in five months had won his duchy again. The Milanese, who were disgusted at the taxes they had to pay to the French, opened their gates to him with joy. Louis XII. was soon told what had happened, and sent another army with the Cardinal of Amboise across the Alps, to drive out Ludovico. Both the French and Ludovico hired Swiss soldiers to fight for them, and when the two armies met at Novara, the Swiss refused to fight against their fellow-countrymen. Ludovico's troops were persuaded to give him up to the French, and thus

shamefully betrayed the man for whom they had promised to fight. He was taken to France and lived ten years in prison, where, it is said, he was not even allowed books to help him to pass the weary hours. The Cardinal of Amboise punished the Milanese very sternly for having rebelled against Louis XII., and many were put to death.

Louis XII. and Naples.—Louis XII. was not content with Milan, he wanted Naples too. But the Spaniards had long considered that they had a right to Naples. At this time a great king and queen, Ferdinand and Isabella, were reigning in Spain. Ferdinand had inherited one part of Spain called Aragon, and Isabella another called Castille: they had married, and had driven the last Moors out of Spain, so that now they ruled over a great and united kingdom. Louis XII. knew that they would not be content to let him win Naples. So he made friends with them, and proposed that they should join in turning out the Spanish prince who was reigning at Naples, and should then divide the kingdom. The conquest was easily carried out. The poor king of Naples was left alone, betrayed on all sides. He gave himself up to the French in order to spare his city from being sacked, and Louis gave him a home in France till his death. But the Spaniards and French soon began to quarrel over their conquest, and war broke out between them. The Spaniards had a great general, Gonsalvo di Cordova, and he soon drove the French out of Naples. In this war a certain French knight, named Bayard, gained great fame. He was called the ‘Knight without fear and without reproach,’ and many tales are told of his bravery. Once he kept a bridge alone against a great body of Spaniards, until

help was sent to him. When the French were driven from Naples, Bayard went to Milan to fight under another famous soldier, the young Gaston di Foix.

The League of Cambrai, 1508.—Louis XII. was so eager to win the lands which he claimed in Italy, that he joined the Pope, Julius II., and the Emperor Maximilian, in making a very shameful treaty called the League of Cambrai. By this treaty, the allies agreed to make war on Venice, and then divide her lands. Venice had always been friendly to France, and it was both mean and foolish of Louis XII. to attack her. He suffered for his fault, for the other allies first let him do all their work, and defeat the Venetians in a very bloody battle, and then they began to turn against him. The Pope formed a new league to drive the French out of Italy. It is strange to find the head of the Church mixed up in all these wars, but the Popes in those days thought more about their lands and their riches, than about spiritual things. The fiery Julius II. was far better suited to be a soldier than a priest. Still, he tried to give a good reason for his war against Louis XII. by calling him the enemy of the Church. The fighting in Italy went on, and though the French were successful at first, things ended badly for them, and they were driven out of Italy. Enemies attacked France on all sides. The English king, Henry VII., landed his troops in the north, the Swiss marched into Burgundy, and the allied English and Austrians won a battle on the French border, in which the French knights ran away so quickly, that they themselves nicknamed it the Battle of the Spurs. Louis XII. was forced to make peace as quickly as possible, and to give up his claims on Italy.

Death of Louis XII., 1515.—Anne of Brittany died, and to gain the friendship of the English, Louis XII. married Mary, the young sister of Henry VIII. She was a mere girl, and Louis tried to please her by all kinds of amusements. But feasting and late hours did not suit the king, who was growing old, and he died a few months after his marriage.

Louis XII. did not succeed in his plans of foreign conquest, but his people did not suffer from his wars. He was careful of his money, and paid his soldiers with the revenues that came to him from his own lands, so that the people were not burdened with taxes. The laws were reformed under his care, the land grew in wealth and prosperity, and the king was called in gratitude 'the father of the people.' The peasants were saved from the cruelties of wandering bands of soldiers. An ordinance was made, which forbade the soldiers to plunder, and those who disobeyed it were so severely punished, that it was said that a soldier no longer dared to take even an egg, without paying for it.

CHAPTER XVIII

FRANCIS I. AND CHARLES V.

Accession of Francis I., 1515.—Louis XII. left no son, and the heir to the throne was his cousin Francis, the Count of Angoulême, who, like Louis himself, was a descendant of Louis of Orleans, the son of Charles V. In order that Brittany might still be united to France, Francis had been married to Claude, the daughter of Louis XII. and Anne of Brittany. But neither Louis nor Anne loved their son-in-law, and it is said that Louis said of him, ‘That big boy will spoil everything.’ Francis was educated by his mother Louise, a princess of the house of Savoy. She was a clever, ambitious woman, fond of pleasure and fond of money. She kept a brilliant court at Cognac, the capital of the county of Angoulême. There Francis grew up with his sister Margaret, surrounded by gay young nobles and artists and poets. He learnt to love pleasure of all kinds, especially hunting, and he liked smart clothes and a gay court; he was brave and active, and wished to win fame as a soldier. When he became king, he was twenty years old, and was full of plans of the great things that he would do.

The state of Europe.—To understand his reign, we shall have to learn a great deal about the other

kings and princes in Europe. During this time the history of the different countries is very much mixed up. It was the time when the nations of modern Europe, as we know them, were forming and strengthening themselves. Each nation wished to enlarge its boundaries and get some of the lands of its neighbours, and in the struggle some of the smaller kingdoms were entirely destroyed and swallowed up by their more powerful neighbours. As a rule, Italy was the battle-field of the different powers. All wished to win that rich land, and as Italy was divided amongst many different rulers, it did not unite against the invaders. Whilst the princes of Europe were fighting together for their own selfish aims, all Christendom was threatened by the advances of the Turks. If only the Christians had united against their common enemy, the Turks might have been driven out of Europe; but as a rule the brave Hungarians were left alone to fight against the terrible enemy, and fell by thousands in bloody battles against them.

Francis I. crosses the Alps.—Francis I.'s first idea was to win Milan again. Maximilian Sforza was ruling there, and had an army of Swiss to defend him. They guarded the passes over the Alps into Italy, so as to keep out a French invasion. But the French discovered a steep shepherds' path over the mountains further south, and by this Francis determined to lead his army. A band of workmen was sent to improve the path; still, when the army crossed, it was so perilous that the horses had to be led by the bridle in single file. It seemed impossible to drag the heavy cannon over such a path, but Francis insisted, and they were dragged up by the soldiers, and sometimes let down

with cords over steep places. The king himself shared all the fatigues of his men, and wrote to his mother that 'he, who had not seen what they had seen, would not have believed it possible, that horsemen and cannon could have been taken by such a way.'

Battle of Marignano, 1515.—The Swiss were amazed when they heard of the descent of the French into Italy. They retired from the Alps towards Milan, and Francis followed them, and encamped at the little village of Marignano, not far from Milan. Here he was attacked one evening by the Swiss. The battle began when the sun was already setting. The Swiss attacked with great fury, and the battle raged whilst the darkness gathered, and the feeble rays of the moon, struggling through the thick clouds of dust raised by the soldiers, hardly allowed them to know friend from foe. At last complete darkness forced them to stop. The night was passed by both armies on the battle-field. Francis did not rest for more than a few minutes, leaning against the muzzle of a cannon. An hour before dawn, he had everything ready to begin the battle again. All through the night the sound of the trumpets calling back the men to their places, had never ceased. The Swiss were attacked on all sides, but stood their ground well, till a body of Venetian troops, allies of the French, arrived on the battle-field and charged the Swiss, with cries of 'St. Marco!' Troubled by this unexpected attack, they began to draw back, but fought on bravely for some time, and did not fly till they had left 8000 men dead upon the field.

Bayard knights Francis I.—On the field of battle Francis bade Bayard dub him knight, saying that all counted him the most worthy knight. Bayard

at first refused, saying that the king was knight before all other knights, but Francis insisted. Then Bayard touched him on the shoulder with his sword, and addressing his sword afterwards, said that it should always be honoured as a sacred relic, since it had knighted so beautiful and so powerful a prince.

The victory of Marignano gave all the duchy of Milan into the hands of Francis, and made him the most powerful prince in Europe ; all hastened to seek his friendship, and it seemed as if no one could be strong enough to go against him.

The Emperor Charles V., 1519.—Three years after this great battle, the Emperor Maximilian died. For some years there had been much scheming about who should succeed him. The emperor was chosen by seven of the chief German princes, called the Electors, three of whom were archbishops. The two last emperors had both been princes of the house of Austria ; and the heir to the house of Austria, Charles, Maximilian's grandson, hoped that he might be chosen in his turn. Charles had already inherited from his other grandfather Ferdinand the kingdom of Spain, and from his father Philip the rich provinces of the Netherlands, which Mary of Burgundy had brought as her dowry to Maximilian, and left to her son Philip, who was now dead. Charles was a young man, only nineteen years old, quiet and reserved in his ways, but Francis felt that, should he be chosen emperor, he must become the chief man in Europe. Francis determined therefore to try to be chosen emperor himself. Each side began to bribe the electors ; large sums of money were given, and the electors freely took money from both, and made promises to both. In the end Charles was

chosen, for he seemed less of a stranger to the Germans than Francis, and he became emperor as Charles v.

The Field of the Cloth of Gold, 1520.—Francis was very indignant, and he believed that the great power of Charles, whose lands surrounded his on all sides, was a real danger for France. Each felt that the other was his rival, and that peace between them could not last for long. Each therefore was eager to have Henry VIII. of England as his friend, in the struggle that was sure to come. Francis asked Henry to come over the sea, and meet him near Calais. Each king went to the place of meeting with such magnificence and such a splendid train of followers that the meeting is known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold. At first the two kings did not meet without a great deal of state, but one morning Francis rose earlier than usual, and dressing himself rode off with only two gentlemen and a page to the English camp. He made his way through the astonished guards to the room where Henry lay still asleep, and woke him by knocking at the door. Henry was surprised and delighted by this mark of confidence, and the two kings exchanged rich presents and most affectionate words. Francis even helped Henry to dress. Both took part in the games and feats of arms in which the days were spent. One evening Henry came and challenged Francis to wrestle with him. Francis was the more active, and succeeded in throwing Henry, who got up red with anger and wanted to begin again, but this the attendants managed to prevent. After twenty-five days of festivities the two kings parted with many expressions of friendship. But Henry VIII. had had a quiet meeting with Charles v. just before he had crossed to Calais,

and went straight away to meet him again. Both he and Wolsey, his great minister, preferred the friendship of the Emperor to that of Francis, and made a treaty with him.

Treason of the Constable of Bourbon.—It was not long before war broke out between Francis I. and Charles V. The Pope joined with Charles to chase the French out of Italy, and once more they were driven from Milan. Francis was preparing to lead a new army into Italy when he was delayed by a grave danger at home. The greatest of the French nobles was the Constable of Bourbon. Himself the head of one branch of the Bourbon family, he had married the heiress of the other branch, who, dying soon after, left him all her lands. Louise of Savoy, the king's mother, was also related to the Bourbons, and she now claimed these lands. Some say that she wished to marry the Constable of Bourbon, and in her anger at his unwillingness determined to ruin him. She brought a suit against him in the law-courts of Paris. Already other signs had shown Bourbon that he had lost the king's favour. Though the victory of Marignano had been due in great part to him, he had been left aside whilst others, less able, had been given important work to do. Now he was threatened with the loss of all his lands. Full of pride and anger, he determined to revenge himself by making friends with the chief enemy of his king. He made offers of alliance to Charles V., and promised that he and his followers would come to the aid of the troops of Charles, if they invaded France. The Emperor promised in return that he would marry him to his sister, and give him a principality in the south of France.

We see from this that the feeling of patriotism, the love of one's country, was still weak. A feudal prince cared more for his own power than for his king and his country, and Bourbon, one of the last great feudal princes, was willing to overthrow his king if only he could win greatness for himself. Francis heard of Bourbon's plot, and stopped at Lyons on his way to Italy, unwilling to leave such an enemy behind him. Bourbon was summoned before the king. He denied all the charges against him, and promised to follow Francis to Italy. In order to make ready, he returned to his own lands, but from thence sent one excuse after another for not coming, pretending to be too ill to leave his bed. At last he fled, disguised as a servant, with only one or two followers, and, after meeting with many dangers, reached the Emperor's lands in safety, and joined the army that was to invade France.

Battle of Pavia, 1525.—Meanwhile the French had suffered more disasters in Italy. In one of the battles, Bayard, the brave knight, was mortally wounded. Bourbon came upon him as he lay dying at the foot of a tree, and told him how much he pitied him, when he saw him in such a state. 'Sir,' answered Bayard, 'there is no need to pity me, for I die as a man of honour, but I pity you when I see you serve against your prince, your country, and your oath.'

When Francis himself came to Italy, he carried all before him, and once more entered Milan. Pavia, the second city of the Milanese, was occupied by the imperialist army, and Francis surrounded it in order to take it. The imperialists were in want of food and of money to pay their troops, and it seemed as if Francis must become the master of Italy. But Pavia held out bravely,

and after three months an army, in which Bourbon was one of the generals, came to its relief. Francis' wisest generals advised him to go away without risking a battle, but he was eager to fight, and full of confidence. A terrible and bloody battle followed, in which the French were utterly defeated. Many of their bravest soldiers were killed or taken prisoners; 9000 men lay dead upon the field. The king fought bravely, and would not fly, but at last he was surrounded and compelled to yield himself prisoner. It was a terrible blow for France, and the king, from the Italian fortress where he was imprisoned, wrote to his mother: 'Nothing is left to me save honour and life.'

Captivity of Francis I.—Louise of Savoy showed a great deal of courage and energy, and at once took steps to protect the French borders from invasion, and to keep the country in order. Charles v. was determined to get every possible advantage from having the French king in his power. He asked such hard conditions of peace that it was impossible for France to grant them. After a while Francis was taken to Spain, as the general who had charge of him was afraid lest efforts should be made to rescue him. When he landed in Spain the nobles received him with great honours, and his journey across Spain was a succession of festivities; but at the castle of Madrid a very different lot awaited him. Charles v. had no idea of making his captivity pleasant. He was lodged in one of the strongest towers of the fortress, in a room with a single window, thickly barred with iron, and a hundred feet above the ground. Rich tapestries were sent from France to cover the bare walls, but nothing could make it a cheerful place.

Messengers were sent from France to discuss the terms of peace, but nothing could be settled, since neither side would give way. Francis again and again asserted, that he would rather suffer a long captivity, than yield what would be shameful to himself and hurtful to his country. After a while he fell dangerously ill. Charles v. was alarmed lest death should take his captive from him. He sent his own doctor to tend the invalid, and at last came to visit him himself. When Francis saw the Emperor enter, he sat up with difficulty in his bed and bowed. Charles v. threw himself into his arms and held him for a few moments in a close embrace. 'Sire,' said Francis, 'you see before you your prisoner and your slave.' Charles answered with affectionate and comforting words. The next day a much more welcome visitor arrived. Francis' sister Margaret, who loved him with the greatest tenderness, had come from France to try and arrange the deliverance of her brother. On her way across Spain she heard of his serious illness, and hastened on, full of the deepest anxiety. The king was cheered for a moment by her arrival, but soon became much worse. Margaret despaired of all earthly help. She ordered an altar to be put up in his room, and there mass was celebrated. The king partook of the host, and shortly after his state began to improve, and he slowly gathered strength again. But Margaret could not get any easier terms of peace from Charles.

The Treaty of Madrid, 1526.—Francis had repeatedly said that he would remain a prisoner all his life, rather than agree to Charles's terms. But he was weary of prison, and at last he agreed to sign the treaty of Madrid. In it he promised to give up the

Milanese for ever, and to give Burgundy to Charles v. He was also to marry Charles's sister, and until these things were done, his two sons were to come and be prisoners in Spain instead of him. Francis swore solemnly on the Gospels to keep this treaty, and after a very affectionate meeting with Charles v., he set out for France. At the river Bidassoa, which separates France and Spain, he got into a boat, just as his two little sons did the same on the other side. In the middle of the river a landing-place had been put up. Francis and his sons landed upon it at the same moment; the little princes kissed his hand, and he embraced them. Then he entered their boat and was rowed to the French shore, whilst they passed on to their sad captivity.

When he found himself once more in his own country Francis jumped upon a horse and cried with joy: 'Now I am king! I am king again!' In spite of his solemn oaths he did not in the least mean to keep the treaty of Madrid. He looked about for friends with whom he could ally himself against Charles, and found that the Pope Clement VII. was angry at Charles's conduct in Italy, and ready to go against him. So a league, called the Holy League, was formed against Charles v., and the war in Italy began again.

The Sack of Rome, 1527.—The Italians hoped that, with the help of the French, they might get rid of the Spaniards and Germans. But the Duke of Bourbon got together a great army, mostly of German adventurers called *lanzknights*. Charles v. never had any money to spare, and he did not send Bourbon enough to pay his army. So Bourbon let the men plunder the rich Milanese lands, and then led them to Rome. They marched quickly, and reached the walls of Rome tired

out, with hardly any provisions or gunpowder left. Bourbon told them, that they could only save themselves from ruin, by taking Rome at once. The next morning, when all was wrapped in thick mist, they drew near the walls. Bourbon mounted the first ladder, but hardly was he upon the walls when a ball struck him, and he fell. He was carried away dying, and his soldiers, filled with fury at his fall, dashed into Rome, which was soon at their mercy. The Pope took refuge in the fortress of St. Angelo ; the terrified people tried to hide themselves, or sought safety in the churches. For eight days the city was at the mercy of the fierce soldiers. It was the richest city in the world, full of the treasures of art. But nothing was respected. The lanzknechts were mostly Protestants, and they pillaged the churches and took away the rich vessels. The Spanish soldiers plundered the palaces and sought gold everywhere. Cardinals, nobles, and merchants were tortured to make them give up their treasures. The soldiers wandered about dressed in the richest stuffs, with gold chains round their necks, riding on the Pope's mules. No one buried the dead bodies, and soon pestilence broke out. The Pope was obliged to give himself up to the imperial army, and was kept a prisoner. After many months he succeeded in escaping, and at last signed a humiliating treaty with Charles v.

The Paix des Dames, 1529.—There was great indignation in Europe at the sack of Rome, and Francis I. thought it a good moment to begin war against Charles v., and try once more to conquer the Milanese. But his army was unsuccessful, and he grew more and more anxious to get his sons out of the hands

of Charles v. Little was known about their state. Their French attendants had been sent away, and they were kept closely in a lonely fortress. At last a peace was concluded at Cambrai by Charles's aunt and Francis' mother, which was called the *Paix des Dames* (the ladies' peace), and by paying a large sum of money, and giving up Milan for ever, Francis got back his sons.

Treaty of Crespy, 1544.—After this there was peace for six years, but Francis could not give up the hope of winning Milan. He looked about for new allies. In Germany the people who had followed the religious teaching of Luther, and given up obedience to the Pope, had joined together in a league against the Emperor, who wished to put down the reformers. Francis made friends with the German Lutherans, and also with Charles's most powerful enemy, the Sultan of the Turks. It was strange that a Christian prince should make friends with the Turks, whom all Christians wished to drive out of Europe; but Francis was willing to do anything that could harm the Emperor. He sent a solemn embassy to Constantinople to ask for the friendship of the Sultan, and seized the first chance to begin the war again. It was not till the year 1544 that, tired out with the long struggle, he at last made peace, and signed the treaty of Crespy en Valois, by which he gave up his claim to Milan.

The reign of Francis I. had begun brilliantly, but it was in no way a happy reign for his people. Louis XII. had allowed the Parlements to have a voice in the affairs of the kingdom, but Francis I. would not listen to them, and forbade them to interfere. He agreed with the Pope to take away the right of the French Church to choose its own bishops and abbots; and

after his day they were always chosen by the King and approved by the Pope. His wars cost a great deal of money, and besides he wasted money on his pleasures and his favourites, and the people were heavily taxed.

Religious Reformation.—In France, as in other lands at this time, wise and good men were trying to reform the Church. At first Francis himself was friendly to the reformers. There were many distinguished poets and writers in his day, and he liked to have them round him and to talk with them. Most of them wished for reforms in religion, and Francis' sister Margaret agreed with them too. But after a while Margaret married the king of Navarre, and went to live in the Pyrenees. Then Francis began to listen to other friends, one of whom was the Constable Montmorency, a fierce and cruel man, who hated the reformers. So it came about that Francis allowed the reformers to be persecuted, particularly when he saw that many of them wanted more freedom for the people, in political as well as religious matters. In the south of France there were some simple peasants living in the mountains, called the Vaudois, who for a long while had worshipped God in their own simple way. They were called heretics by the Church, and one of the judges in the south thought this was a good chance to destroy them. He got the king's permission, and then ordered a massacre of the Vaudois. Three little towns and twenty-five villages were all completely destroyed, and even the women and children were put to death. Francis himself was not cruel, but he was weak and ill, worn out with pleasures, and old before his time, so that he allowed others to have their own way.

The Renaissance.—In one way Francis I. did much for France. He loved art and all that was beautiful. The great painters of Italy came to his court, and he treated them as his friends. Encouraged by him, art flourished in France. He himself built several beautiful palaces, some on the river Loire, and the great palace in the forest of Fontainebleau. He never stayed long in one palace, but liked to move from one to another, carrying his splendid court with him. Never before had the French court been so splendid, but as it grew splendid it grew wicked too. The courtiers cared only for pleasure and for growing rich, and the king himself showed to all that his chief wish was to have his own way and enjoy himself. Yet his people were proud of him, because he was bright and amiable and brave, and they thought that he would make France glorious. He died in the year 1547, the same year as Henry VIII. of England, and of the three rivals Charles V. alone remained, and grew more powerful every year.

CHAPTER XIX

THE GUISES

Henry II., 1547-1559.—Francis I. was succeeded by his son Henry, a dull, stupid man, who cared only for games and sports, and was quite willing to be led by others. He had no love for his wife Catharine, an Italian lady of the family of the Medici, the great merchant princes of Florence, but his whole heart was given to a great lady of the court, Diana of Poitiers. She was much older than he was, but she was very clever, and she was still handsome, and she could make Henry do anything she liked: so she and her friends had it all their own way at court. One of her friends was the Constable Anne de Montmorency, a hard, cruel man; but her chief friends were the Guise family, who now for some years play a great part in French history. Claude, the first Duke of Guise, was not really a Frenchman; he was a younger son of the Duke of Lorraine, and as he saw no chance of getting on at home, he came to the French court and grew to be a friend of Francis I. He had many children, and they soon showed that they knew how to get on. The eldest, Francis, who became Duke of Guise, was a very clever general; the second was a priest, had many bishoprics given him, and was made a cardinal

when he was still quite a young man, and is generally known as the Cardinal of Lorraine; a daughter, Mary, married the King of Scotland, and was the mother of Mary, Queen of Scots. Diana of Poitiers and her friends did not care for the good of France as long as they could grow rich themselves. A writer of the times says they were like swallows after the flies. Henry II. gave them all they wanted, and in a very few weeks had wasted an immense sum of money.

Persecution of the Protestants.—These people, who were given up to pleasure and sin, were very eager to persecute the Protestants, or Huguenots, as those who followed the teaching of the Reformation, were called in France. They forbade them to worship God in their own way, and many were imprisoned and put to death. But the Huguenots increased rapidly. Many great people were friendly to their teaching, and some even of the Bishops favoured them. It seemed as if all good and honourable people were inclined to become Huguenot—and no wonder, when such men as the Cardinal of Lorraine were leaders of the Church.

Capture of Metz, Toul, and Verdun.—Henry II. was very anxious to begin the war with the Emperor Charles V. again; and for this reason, though he persecuted the Huguenots in France, he made friends with the Protestants in Germany, and invaded the German borders. Charles V. was not prepared for him, and the French captured the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, all three strong and important fortresses. Charles V. did not wish to lose these cities. He made peace with the German Protestants, and brought his army to besiege Metz. Francis of Guise hastened to defend the place, and soon showed what a brilliant

soldier he was. Again and again he came out of Metz at the head of his soldiers to fall upon the besieging army. Pestilence came to help him, and Charles v.'s soldiers died by hundreds. It was miserable to see their sufferings, and at last the Emperor, who had never before suffered a great defeat, was obliged to retreat. He said sadly, 'Fortune does not like old men.'

Abdication of Charles V., 1556.—In Italy, too, the French were making war against the Imperialists, but not so successfully. Charles v. was getting worn-out with the cares of his long life. He determined to lay down his crown and retire from the world. First he made a truce with France, then he divided his empire into two parts. Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and all the wide colonies won by Spanish explorers in America he gave to his son Philip, whom he had married to Mary Tudor, queen of England. Austria and Hungary and the name of Emperor he gave to his brother Ferdinand. He himself retired to a monastery in Spain. There he lived for three years, ill and wretched, and longing for the world which he had left.

The Duke of Guise takes Calais, 1558.—Peace did not last long. Henry II. sent Francis of Guise to Italy with an army, whilst some Spanish and English troops under Count Egmont, Philip II.'s general, invaded the north of France. They defeated Montmorency at the battle of St. Quentin, and took him prisoner. Charles v. in his convent heard of this victory, and asked impatiently whether his son was going to push his way on to Paris. When he heard that the victory had not been followed up, he would

read no more of the papers sent him. But the victory had caused terror in France. Francis of Guise was quickly called back from Italy, and he soon made the enemy retire. Then suddenly, before any one knew what he was going to do, he marched against Calais, which had so long belonged to England. It was not well prepared to resist him, and was soon forced to yield. So the English lost their last possession in France. The capture of Calais made Francis of Guise the hero of France. He and his family were all-powerful. Mary Stuart, the niece of Francis of Guise, was married to Henry II.'s eldest son, the Dauphin Francis. Both were mere children, and the Dauphin was a miserable, sickly little boy. Mary Stuart was brought from Scotland to be educated at the French court. Already as a child she was beautiful and clever, and she loved the gay and brilliant life of the court.

Treaty of Cateau Cambrésis, 1559.—After a while peace was made with Spain, by the treaty of Cateau Cambrésis. Once more France gave up all claims to Italy, and to strengthen the peace, Philip II., who was a widower, as Mary of England was dead, married Elizabeth, daughter of Henry II. Splendid fêtes were held in honour of the peace. Henry II. himself took part in the tournaments, and in one of them the lance of his opponent by mistake went through the bars of the King's helmet, and gave him a wound in his eye from which he died a few days afterwards.

Francis II., 1559-1560.—Henry II. was succeeded by his three sons, one after the other, and all three together only reigned twenty-five years. They were poor feeble creatures both in body and mind, and these

three kings show how the race of the Valois dwindled miserably away in consequence of their vicious lives and their love of dissipation. Diana of Poitiers lost her power at Henry II.'s death, but the Guises only gained in power, for their lovely niece, Mary Stuart, was able to do as she liked with Francis II. The Queen-mother, Catharine, had long learnt to hide her real feelings, and pretended to be friends with the Guises. Montmorency had to leave the court, and the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine had everything their own way.

The Huguenots.—The two chief princes of the royal family were both in favour of the Reformed religion. These were Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and his brother, the Prince of Condé, who was much beloved. To the same party belonged the greatest hero of the time, Admiral Coligny. But these men had no power at court. The persecution of the Huguenots went on. Many were put to death, some with horrible tortures. Yet their numbers grew, and men asked how long they should patiently submit to these cruelties, and to the tyranny of the Guises. At last a plot was made by those who were discontented with the state of affairs, at the head of which was a man named La Rénaudie. The idea was to seize the Guises, and then give the care of the king to Condé. Condé himself took no active part in the plot, and his name was not mentioned. He was spoken of as the mute chief. Plans were carefully arranged, but many knew of the plot, and amongst them was a traitor, who told the Guises. They at once took the king to the Castle of Amboise, and so terrified him with stories about the intentions of the conspirators, that he thought

his only safety lay in the Guises. He named Francis of Guise lieutenant-general of the kingdom, with power to do as he liked. Then the Duke of Guise was able to punish the conspirators. La Rénaudie was killed fighting, but many others were brought as prisoners to Amboise. Some were driven into the town by the brutal soldiers, tied to horses' tails. There some had their heads cut off, some were hung, some were thrown into the Loire, and the streets ran with blood. The ladies of the court from the castle windows, watched with amusement the agonies of the dying. Most of the prisoners met their fate bravely, with the psalms, which some of the reformers had turned into French, on their lips.

The Trial of Condé.—The Duke of Guise hoped to ruin Condé too ; but at first he could not succeed in proving that he had taken any part in the plot, and when the Estates-General met at Orleans, Condé dared to come there. But Guise had proofs of his guilt. He was cast into prison, and a number of judges were appointed to try him. All but two agreed in condemning him to death. One of the two who refused to agree was the Chancellor l'Hôpital, a just and good man, who hated persecutions for religion, and wished men to live in peace. He hoped to save Condé by finding excuses to put off his execution. Condé showed true courage ; he said he was no prisoner, since his spirit was free, and his conscience clean. His brother, the king of Navarre, was also in danger. The Guises made the king summon him to court, and then tried to persuade him to stab him with his dagger. But the king failed to make up his mind to this horrid deed.

Death of Francis II., 1560.—Just at this time the king fell ill, and it was clear that he could not live many days. The queen-mother, Catharine, saw that now she would have a chance of escaping from the tyranny of the Guises. Everything was changed by the death of Francis II. Mary Stuart had to leave France, where she had been so happy, and go back to Scotland to meet her troubles. For the time the power of the Guises was broken. The new king, Charles IX., was only ten years old ; Queen Catharine determined to rule in his name. To make herself strong against the Guises, she made friends with the king of Navarre. If he had been a great man, he might have done much for France and religious liberty. But he was weak and pleasure-loving, and Catharine, who was sly and clever, could lead him as she liked. There was one man, however, who tried to get her to make things better, and that was the Chancellor de l'Hôpital. He wanted to settle the religious disputes, and bring order into the government. The last kings had wasted money so freely on their favourites, that the court was terribly in debt. Indeed, the country was in a most dangerous state. Everywhere there was bitterness and anger on account of the religious differences. People did not then believe that it was possible to allow two different forms of religion in the same country, and those who hated persecution thought that peace could only come, if the two sides could come to some agreement about the points on which they differed. Catharine herself was not at all religious, and was quite willing to favour either party. She hoped to prevent either from getting too strong, so that she might be able to play a great part herself.

L'Hôpital began to make economies in the government, and he was able to pass an edict to stop religious persecution. Condé was brought from prison and cleared of the charges made against him. It was even arranged that he and Guise should publicly make friends. They met in the presence of the little king. Guise said that he had never tried to harm Condé, and then at the king's request they embraced.

The Conference of Poissy, 1561.—Guise grew afraid lest de l'Hôpital, with the support of the reformers, should grow too strong. He therefore bound himself, together with the Constable de Montmorency and the Marshal St. André, that they three would stand by one another, and watch over one another's interests. They were called the Triumvirate, and they did all they could to prevent any favour being shown to the reformers. De l'Hôpital hoped that it would be possible for the two religious parties to agree together, if they could meet and talk over their differences. A conference was arranged at Poissy near Paris, at which the reformers were asked to state their views. The king and the queen-mother, with the other members of the royal family, surrounded by a great number of archbishops and bishops in their splendid robes, met together. Then twelve of the leading teachers of the Reformed religion were brought in. There were no seats for them, and they were led to a bar which separated them from the court and the bishops, as if they were criminals. Their leader, Beza by name, a pious and learned man, who had come from Geneva for the conference, after first falling on his knees and praying aloud to God, explained what were the opinions of the reformers. He was listened to

with loud murmurs from the bishops. For several days the meetings went on, but nothing could come of them, for neither side would give way. Still l'Hôpital would not allow the persecutions to go on, and published an edict which said that the Huguenots might meet for worship outside walled towns, and in country places.

CHAPTER XX

THE WARS OF RELIGION

Massacre of Vassy, 1562.—L'Hôpital had hoped by his edict of toleration to give peace to France, but such toleration was hateful to Guise. Three months afterwards Guise was passing, with a band of armed followers, through the little town of Vassy in Champagne. As they drew near, they heard a bell calling the Huguenots to worship. The sound filled them with fury, and the soldiers rushed to surround the building, where 1200 Huguenots were gathered. They fired upon the defenceless crowd of men, women, and children as they tried to escape; about fifty were killed and two hundred wounded. Then Guise and his soldiers went on their way.

This cruel deed was the beginning of the terrible wars of religion, which brought such suffering to France. Many of the leading gentry in the land were on the side of the reformers, and they felt that the time was come to use force to free the land from the tyranny of the Guises. Anthony, king of Navarre, had been won over some time before to the Roman Catholic side; he was a weak, vain man, and easily led away; but his wife, Jeanne d'Albret, would not follow him. 'Sooner,' she said, 'than ever go to mass, had I my kingdom and my

son in my hand, I would cast them both into the depth of the sea, that they might not be a hindrance to me.' Louis, Prince of Condé, was now the leader of the Huguenot party. He went to Orleans, where the party was strong, and there the Huguenot leaders gathered round him with their followers. Admiral Coligny was slow to come; he was full of horror at the thought of civil war, and dreaded taking any step to bring it on. But his brave wife urged him to go and use his talents as a general in God's cause. He listened to her as to a voice from heaven, and joined Condé.

The First Civil War, 1562.—The Huguenot leaders tried to keep good order amongst their followers. Swearing and drinking were not allowed in their camp, and plundering was forbidden. Still, it was not always possible to prevent the images in the churches from being broken, since many thought them as bad as idols. Anthony, king of Navarre, fought on the side of the Guises, and was killed in the war, but no one regretted him. The chief battle of this first war was fought at Dreux. It was a fierce fight, and only ended when darkness closed in. Montmorency was taken prisoner by the Huguenots, and Condé by the Duke of Guise. Coligny thought it best to lead the Huguenot army back to Orleans, and Guise was left master of the field. After this the war continued to rage. Guise hoped to take Orleans, the chief city held by the Huguenots. One evening he was riding round the city and arranging to make a general attack the next day, when in a lonely spot a man on horseback rode suddenly up and shot him in the back. The wound was fatal, and Guise died in a few days. The assassin was taken and tortured to make him confess

who had urged him to this deed. In his torture he accused the Huguenot leaders, but there seems to have been no truth in his words. He was a wild, foolish man, and had been driven by his own hatred of the Duke to murder him. He was cruelly punished, for he was burned with hot irons, and torn to pieces by four horses.

Peace of Amboise, 1563.—The death of Guise made it easy to bring the war to an end, since the queen-mother had no wish utterly to destroy the Huguenot party. The peace, which was signed at Amboise, gave the Huguenots permission to hold their services in certain places. It was not enough to satisfy the Huguenots, but it made the Roman Catholic party very angry. The two parties could not live in peace. In places where the Roman Catholics were strong, they did not allow the Huguenots the liberties given them by the peace of Amboise, and where the Huguenots were strong, they took more than was allowed them. Catharine and her courtiers, who had no interest in the religious question, grew afraid of the Huguenots, because they saw that they wished for reforms in the government as well as in religion, and that they found fault with the wickedness and extravagance of the court. Phillip II., king of Spain, the great enemy of the Reformed religion everywhere in Europe, did his utmost to stir up Catharine against the Huguenots. It was clear that war must soon break out again, and the Huguenots began to get ready for it.

It was not only in France that there was strife between the two religious parties. In the Netherlands too, there were many who followed the Reformed religion, and they were driven by the cruel persecutions

of their Spanish ruler, Phillip II., to take up arms. The German Protestants helped the Huguenots, and Queen Elizabeth of England sent them money, though she was afraid to put herself openly at the head of the Protestant party in Europe.

Second Religious War, 1566.—The Huguenots began the second war. Their plan was to seize the young king and his mother, and so save them from the influence of the Cardinal of Lorraine. But the plan was discovered, and the court got safely to Paris, where the Roman Catholic party was strongest. Montmorency was killed in battle, and after this peace was again made for a time. But the Huguenots felt more and more that they could not trust to the promises of the court. The centre of their power was La Rochelle, a port on the Bay of Biscay. It had always been a busy trading city, and had managed its own affairs with little interference from the government. Now, most of its inhabitants were Huguenots, and for many years it was the chief Huguenot city. Jeanne d'Albret went there with her son Henry, whom she had brought up simply like a peasant boy on the slopes of the Pyrenees, and who was now fast growing into manhood. She was no longer safe in her own lands, since she was too near Phillip II., the great enemy of the Huguenots. All the east of France was strong for the Huguenots. The court became more and more alarmed at their growing power, and Catharine would not listen any longer to the wise advice of the old Chancellor L'Hôpital, but obliged him to give up his office and retire to the country. A great army was gathered together, and Henry of Anjou, the king's brother, was placed at the head of it, with a more experienced general to direct

him. The Huguenots were defeated in two battles, at one of which, fought at Jarnac, Condé was killed. After his death, the young Henry of Navarre was looked upon as the chief of the Huguenots, and the young Prince of Condé went with him to the war; but both were mere boys, little more than fifteen years old. The real leader was Admiral Coligny, and the two Princes were sometimes spoken of as the Admiral's pages. Full of love for his religion and for his country, Coligny had only joined in the war to save the land from worse evils, and he was unwilling to make peace, unless he could feel sure of the liberty, to win which he had begun the war. The two battles which they had lost did not take away the courage of the Huguenots. At the same time, Catharine and her friends saw that they could only crush the Huguenots with the help of Spain, and the old hatred of Spain was too strong to allow the friendship with Philip II. to last long. Once more peace was made with the Huguenots, and La Rochelle and some other towns were left in their hands as pledges that they should be allowed liberty of worship.

The Huguenot Leaders go to Paris.—Coligny was full of hope from this peace. The king, Charles IX., showed great friendship to him. Unfortunately, Charles's mind was so weak, that no trust could be put in him, but for the moment, he listened to Coligny and his plans for reform. It was proposed that Henry of Navarre should marry the king's sister, Margaret of Valois, and thus lasting peace be made between the two parties. The Huguenot leaders gained confidence in the court, and came to Paris full of hope for the future. Jeanne d'Albret was horrified with the wickedness of the life at court, and determined that her son should

not live there after his marriage. But she had not long been in Paris, when she fell ill of a fever and died. People's minds were so suspicious that they accused Catharine of having poisoned her, but there seems to have been no truth in the charge. She was a great loss to the Huguenots, and specially to her son. Strong in virtue, she had tried to train him aright, but he had much of his father's love of pleasure, which often led him wrong in after life.

The attempted Murder of Coligny.—Catharine did not like Coligny's growing influence with the king. In her heart she cared for neither party so long as she was a person of importance herself. She was now willing to join in a plot with the young Duke of Guise to murder Coligny. Coligny knew well that it was dangerous for him to be in Paris amongst his enemies. But he pitied the weak young king from his heart, and wished to help him to rule wisely if he could. One day, just as he had left the king, and was going home through the street to dinner, a shot was fired at him. It was well aimed, but at the moment he chanced to turn a little aside, and the ball went only through his finger and arm, giving him an ugly wound. His friends were afraid lest the ball had been poisoned, but Coligny calmly said: 'Nothing will happen but what it may please God to order.'

Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572.—That time he escaped, but a still more terrible plot was preparing. The Huguenot leaders were gathered in Paris, where the citizens had always hated them. It was a splendid chance for the Roman Catholic party to rid themselves of their enemies. It is impossible to tell how the first idea grew up, but a plan was made

between Catharine, her son Henry of Anjou, the Guises and their friends, that on the coming festival of St. Bartholomew, the Roman Catholics should rise in Paris and put the Huguenots to death.

The king had been furious at the attempt to kill Coligny, and himself visited him on his sick-bed. But Catharine knew how easy it was to move her weak and passionate son. She told him stories about a pretended plot of the Huguenots, and how she and he were both in danger from them, till she made him more furious against Coligny and the Huguenots than he had been against Coligny's murderers. Charles IX. gave his consent to the proposed massacre, only Henry of Navarre, now his brother-in-law, and the Prince of Condé were to be spared. Everything was carefully planned. On the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day the gates of Paris were ordered to be shut, that none might escape, and the troops and citizens of Paris were bidden to be ready to obey the king's commands. The houses in which the Huguenots were lodged were marked with a white cross. The Roman Catholics were to know one another by a white cross on their hats, and a handkerchief tied round their arms. The tolling of a bell gave the signal that the massacre was to begin.

The Duke of Anjou, the king's brother, and the Duke of Guise themselves were to make sure that Coligny was killed. Coligny was alone in his house with his chaplain and a few followers. The noise in the streets woke him from his sleep, and soon warned him of his danger. He rose and wrapped his dressing-gown around him and asked his chaplain to pray. Then when he heard that the soldiers had forced their way into the house, unmoved by fear, he said to those

who were with him : 'For a long time I have kept myself in readiness for death ; as for you, save yourselves if you can.' They succeeded in escaping on to the roof and fled. Then the soldiers burst into the room, where the old man, still helpless from his wound, was sitting quietly waiting for them. 'Is not this the Admiral ?' cried one of them. 'I am he,' answered Coligny. Then the man struck him with his sword, and the others fell on him and soon killed him. Guise was waiting impatiently in the court below. 'Have you finished ?' he called out, and then that he might be sure, he bade them throw the murdered man out of the window ; they quickly obeyed. Guise bent down to wipe the blood from Coligny's face. 'I recognise him : it is he himself !' he cried, and then he kicked the face of the dead man, and gaily called on his soldiers to follow him, saying, 'We have begun well !'

Meanwhile the bells were pealing forth the summons to the general massacre, and the Roman Catholics raised the cry that the Huguenots were coming to kill the king. The fierce mob of Paris rose and fell upon the hated Huguenots, who were quite unprepared. Before long the streets, the houses, were filled with dead bodies. Even in the Palace of the Louvre itself Huguenot nobles were murdered. Margaret of Valois, Henry of Navarre's young wife, was wakened from her sleep by some Huguenots rushing to her to save them. They were murdered in her presence, and her bed and night-dress were sprinkled with their blood. Neither learning nor high birth could save the Huguenots, and many of the most distinguished men in France were killed that day. The court ladies, with Catharine amongst them, feasted their eyes on the dead bodies,

and heard with loud laughter of the success of the massacre. The Duke of Anjou himself took an active part in it; and it is even said that the king, seeing from a window of the Louvre some Huguenots trying to escape over the Seine, seized a musket and began to fire at them with cries of 'Kill, kill!'

From killing the mob went on to plundering, and many of the nobles enriched themselves in this way. Other cities, where the Roman Catholics were strong, followed the example of Paris. It is impossible to know how many Huguenots were killed, but at the very least the numbers reached 2000 in Paris, and 20,000 in France altogether.

Death of Charles IX., 1574.—Such a terrible deed could not bring peace to France. Some Huguenots in their terror were willing to go to mass, but most held firm, and their preachers stirred them up to courage. Rochelle and some other towns held out, and an army was sent against them. But there was no confidence in the army; many men shuddered at being with those who had shared in the massacre. Once it was said that drops of blood were seen under the dice which Guise had thrown in a game. Though many lives were lost, Rochelle could not be taken. In the court too there was much trouble; every one seemed to be afraid of his neighbour. The king, who said he was determined now to govern for himself, was more passionate and changeable than ever. He could not get over the feeling that, because of the massacre, he was looked upon as a man with a bad heart. His rest was disturbed by terrible dreams and visions, and after growing slowly weaker in body, and more wretched in mind, he died at the age of twenty-four.

Henry III., 1574-1584.—Charles IX. left no children, and was succeeded by his brother Henry. Henry was the favourite son of his mother, but unfortunately he was not the man to be a good king. He was cruel and bloodthirsty, but he was neither brave nor active in bodily exercises; indeed, he had the manners and ways of a fine lady. He loved smart clothes, and wore jewels even in his ears. He had a passion for tiny dogs and parrots; he used to drive about in his carriage to collect little dogs, and would make their unwilling owners give them up to him. He surrounded himself with favourites, handsome young men who were as silly in their way as himself, and who were called by the indignant people his *mignons*. The *mignons* were always quarrelling, and even in the palace itself, it was quite common for men to be secretly murdered. At such a court, money was wasted in every kind of folly, neither could a king like Henry III. win the respect of any one.

The Huguenots found that under the new king they were still to be treated harshly. Henry of Navarre and young Condé fled from the court and called their followers to arms. They were joined even by the king's brother, Alençon, who was discontented at the way in which he was treated by his brother and mother. Henry III. won back Alençon again by giving him some provinces to govern, and peace was made with the Huguenots, who were again allowed to hold religious services.

CHAPTER XXI

HENRY OF NAVARRE AND THE LEAGUE

The League is formed, 1576. — The Roman Catholics were angry at the peace with the Huguenots, and the Guises were disgusted that they had so little power at court. They decided to bind themselves together in a league with the chief Roman Catholics, and not rest till the Huguenots were destroyed. This league was called the Holy League, and, as its head, Henry of Guise soon became far more powerful than the king himself. The power of the League frightened Henry III., and he thought it best to say that he himself would be at the head of it, and would begin war against the Huguenots again. He had so little money that he could not pay his soldiers, and was soon forced to make peace.

The War of the Three Henries.—In 1584 the Duke of Alençon, the king's brother, died; and as Henry III. had no children, Henry of Navarre, who belonged to the Bourbon family, which was descended from the sixth son of Louis IX., became the rightful heir to the throne. The League was not likely to recognise a Huguenot as the future king. Guise made alliance with Philip II. of Spain, who promised to help him utterly to crush the Huguenots. Henry III. was so

disgusted with the little respect which the League showed him, that he thought of joining Henry of Navarre, who was willing to uphold his authority. But Guise won over Catharine, and she persuaded Henry III. to keep with the League.

The war which followed is called the War of the Three Henries, because of the three princes who took part in it—Henry III., Henry of Navarre, and Henry of Guise. Things looked very bad for Henry of Navarre, but the fact that Philip of Spain helped the League made other princes willing to help Henry. Queen Elizabeth sent him money, and the German princes sent him troops. He was a greater general than the Huguenots had yet had, and with a small body of troops won at Coutras the first battle in an open field, which the Huguenots had won in all these years of war, and thus made himself strong in the south of France.

Henry of Guise in Paris.—The King meanwhile had found out that he was only a tool in Guise's hands. He was coldly received in Paris, where the people adored Guise. Henry of Guise was a handsome, energetic man, tall and strong, victorious in every exercise of bodily skill, the very man to be a popular hero. A scar on his cheek from a wound in battle had won him the surname 'Le Balafre.' He was generous, courteous, and kindly even to the meanest of his followers. Compared to him, the king, with his fine clothes and his jewels, and his languishing ways, seemed a very poor creature. The Parisians did not stop to think of the ruin that might come to France from Guise's friendship with Spain. Henry III. at least saw the danger, and hated the Spanish interference. He was

so irritated with Guise that he forbade him to come to Paris. But Guise came all the same. The citizens welcomed him with enthusiasm, and defended the city against the troops, which the king had brought in, by throwing up barricades, that is, putting chains across the streets. Workmen, students, merchants, lawyers, joined together to make and defend the barricades, so that the troops were blocked in, and could not move down the streets. The king was obliged to beg Guise himself to quiet the people, and, as he could not feel safe in his own capital, he fled by the one gate of which he had the keys, to Chartres, and thence to Blois.

Murder of the Duke of Guise, 1588.—Once safe away from Paris, the king hoped to show that he was still master. He ordered the Estates-General to meet at Blois, and bade Guise come there, that all might consider how to bring order into the land. Guise came, and, as if he were the ruler, treated the king with contempt; the Estates-General too sided with him, and Henry felt that he could not be really king as long as Guise lived. He decided to get rid of his rival by a crime. Guise had many warnings of his danger, but said haughtily that the king dared not touch him. One morning he was told to come and speak to the king, and as he passed through the antechamber leading to the king's presence, he was fallen upon by a number of armed men with cries of 'Ah, traitor! you shall die!' Henry III. himself had posted the murderers in their places. Guise had not time even to draw his sword, but he struggled violently with his murderers, dragging them from one end of the room to the other before he fell dead.

His brother the Cardinal was in the very next room, and when he heard the cries through the wall he exclaimed, 'They are killing my brother!' He was not allowed to leave the room to go to help him, and was soon carried off to prison himself, and executed the next day.

Henry III. is assassinated, 1589.—When the people of Paris heard of the murder of their favourite, they were filled with fury, and said they would no longer consider Henry as king. The League shut the gates of Paris against him, and took as its chiefs the Dukes of Mayenne and Aumale, brothers of the Duke of Guise. Henry had no longer his mother to help him; she had died a few days after the murder of Guise. He was obliged to make friends with Henry of Navarre, and together they marched to besiege Paris. The Parisians looked upon Henry III. as the enemy of God and man; and a half-crazy Dominican friar named Jacques Clément thought that it would be a noble deed to rid the world of him. He came from Paris to the King's camp at St. Cloud, and on pretence of having a letter to give him, was brought into Henry III.'s presence one morning before the king was quite dressed. Henry III. took the letter, and as he was reading it, Clément stabbed him. The guards fell upon the friar and killed him at the king's feet. At first Henry did not think his wound was mortal; but he died eighteen hours afterwards, naming as his successor Henry of Navarre. Henry III., says a writer of the times, died leaving his kingdom and his subjects so poor and weak, that ruin might rather be expected than any improvement. This, he says, came rather by their faults and rebellions than by the fault of their king, who in good

times would have been a good king. But anyhow, it is certain that France suffered much from the rule of the Valois. Under them the liberties of the people were crushed, and the monarchy became absolute, whilst the court became vicious, extravagant, and pleasure-seeking, a centre of corruption for the country.

Accession of the House of Bourbon, 1589.—With Henry of Navarre, or Béarn, began a new family of kings, the Bourbons. They owed their claim to the throne to their descent from one of the younger sons of St. Louis. It was a strange beginning for a new reign. When Henry entered the room where the dead king lay, he found groups of courtiers muttering under their breath, and daring to say, even in his presence, that they would rather submit to any enemy than accept a Huguenot king. Some of his advisers wanted him to change his religion at once, but he felt that this would lose him the confidence of all honest men on both sides. All he would promise to the Roman Catholics was, that he would consider the matter, and call a council within six months to settle differences. He was accepted as king by the Huguenots and by a few Roman Catholics who hated the League. But many nobles slipped away with their followers from the camp at St. Cloud, so that it was impossible to go on with the siege of Paris. Henry withdrew with his few faithful followers to Normandy, and captured Dieppe, so that he might be able to communicate with the queen of England and gain her help.

Meanwhile in Paris there was wild rejoicing over the death of Henry III. The Duchess of Montpensier, Henry of Guise's sister, was beside herself with delight, and rushed through the streets crying, 'Good news ! the

THE BOURBON KINGS.

HENRY IV., 1589-1610.

LOUIS XIII., 1610-1643.

DUKES OF ORLEANS.

LOUIS XIV., 1643-1715.

Louis, Dauphin, dies 1711.

Louis, Duke of Burgundy, dies 1712.

LOUIS XV., 1715-1774.

Louis, Dauphin, dies 1765.

LOUIS XVI., 1774, executed 1793.

Charles Louis, called LOUIS XVII., dies 1795.

LOUIS XVIII., 1814-1824.

CHARLES X., 1824-1830.
Charles, Duke of Berry
dies 1820.

Henry, Count of Chambord.

Philip.

Philip the Regent,
dies 1723.

Louis,
dies 1752.

Louis Philippe,
dies 1785.

Louis Philippe (Egalité),
executed 1795.

LOUIS PHILIPPE,
1830, deposed 1848.

tyrant is dead.' The Duke of Mayenne proclaimed as king the old Cardinal of Bourbon, Henry's uncle. The Cardinal was a prisoner in Henry's power, and Mayenne meant to govern in his name; he trusted to the help of Philip II. of Spain, who sent him troops and money. The violent Roman Catholics of Paris and the leaguers were ready to give their country into the hands of the Spaniards, rather than own Henry as king, and Mayenne marched against him with a large army.

Battle of Ivry, 1590.—Henry had entrenched himself with his little force by the Castle of Arques near Dieppe. Here we see him at his best. He was always cheerful and full of courage, though so poor that he hardly had food to eat, and with so few followers that it seemed as if he must be destroyed. For three weeks Mayenne tried to drive him from Arques, but in vain, and had at last to withdraw. More men now joined Henry, and he marched on Paris and burnt some of the suburbs, and then rapidly moved from town to town, helping friends and attacking enemies. Whilst he was besieging Dreux, Mayenne came from Paris to save the town. The two armies met in the plains of Ivry. Mayenne's army was the bigger, and it seemed as if the day was lost, when, crying, 'Rally round my white plume!' Henry dashed into the thickest of the battle. The large white plume on his helmet became the ensign which his men followed in the fight. None could stand before them, and Henry gained a complete victory.

Siege of Paris.—He marched at once on Paris and laid siege to the city, which was ill prepared to stand it. Food soon failed, but the courage of the people was kept up by the monks, who filled them with

religious zeal, and by the Spanish ambassador, who sold his plate to buy bread for the poor, and cooked great caldrons of porridge outside his doors for the starving. Henry IV. allowed such starving people as wished to escape, to pass safe through his army. The people in Paris were in most terrible straits, living on dogs and



HENRY IV.

rats, and even on human flesh; at last, after more than three months of siege, Philip of Spain sent an army, under his nephew, the Prince of Parma, to help Paris. His coming obliged Henry IV. to retire to Normandy.

Henry joins the Roman Catholic Church, 1593.—Henry IV.'s cause was soon helped by divisions amongst his enemies. The leaders in Paris disagreed with Mayenne; and many Frenchmen began to hate Spanish interference in their affairs. The old Cardinal of Bourbon died, and the League could not agree whom they should set up as king. The States-General were summoned by the League to meet at Paris, and the Spanish ambassador proposed that, in spite of the Salic law, Philip II.'s daughter, whose mother had been Henry III.'s sister, should become queen of France. When he added that she should be married to the Austrian archduke, the French understood the danger their nation was in, and the Parlement made a solemn decree that the Salic law must be respected. Every one was longing for peace; all that was needed was a king whom all would accept. Henry IV. felt that the time was come when, if he would win the kingdom, he must become a Roman Catholic. He asked to be instructed in the Roman Catholic religion by some of the clergy, and declared himself convinced of its truth. To his intimates he said, 'Paris is well worth a mass.' He was not religious enough to feel the question deeply. But on the morning on which he had decided to make what he called 'the perilous jump,' he bade a sad farewell to his old friends the Huguenot ministers, and then went through gaily decorated streets to the Abbey of St. Denis. There the Archbishop of Bourges awaited him, and asked, 'Who are you?' 'I am the king,' answered Henry; and when asked what he wanted he said, 'To be received into the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church.' Then he made his profession of faith.

Crowds of people had come out of Paris to see the sight, and shouted 'Long live the king!' By degrees many of the party of the League joined him, and at last Paris was given up into his hands by its governor, in return for a sum of money.

Submission of the League.—One by one the members of the League submitted to the king, but most of them were paid large sums of money for their submission. The Duke of Mayenne at last sought a meeting with Henry IV. He found him walking in his park, and Henry, after embracing him, began to walk him rapidly about the paths, pointing out the beauties of the place to him. Mayenne was very stout and heavy, and did not know how to get along as quickly as the king. At last Henry, seeing him all red and breathless, laughed, and held out his hand, saying, 'Touch it, my cousin, for this is all the evil you shall ever receive of me.'

Edict of Nantes, 1598.—The Huguenots were very angry when Henry joined the Roman Catholic Church; but some of the wiser ones laboured to make peace, and the king, by the Edict of Nantes, gave them as much liberty as he thought possible. This edict allowed them to hold their services in a large number of towns, to fill public offices, and gave into their hands Rochelle and some other places of surety, where they might keep garisons. It was not all that the Huguenots wanted, and it was much more than the Roman Catholics wished them to have, so it satisfied nobody. But it remained in force for nearly a hundred years, and did much to keep the country in peace and order.

Peace of Vervins, 1598.—Henry IV. did not wish to leave to the Spaniards the strong places which

they held in France, and by declaring war against Philip II. gathered round him those of all parties who loved their country. He was successful in driving the Spaniards out of France, and made them agree to the Peace of Vervins, by which they gave up everything they had won.

Marriage of Henry IV. and Mary of Medicis, 1600.—Now that there was peace, the next thing to be done was to bring back some order into the distracted country. In this work Henry was specially helped by the Duke of Sully, who had been his companion from childhood, and became his chief minister and adviser. One of his first objects was to have the succession to the throne settled. Henry had no children by his wife Margaret of Valois; she was an utterly frivolous woman, and he had not even seen her for twenty years, so he desired to be divorced from her, which was done with the Pope's permission. He then married an Italian princess, Mary of Medicis. She landed at Marseilles with a train of ladies all in cloth of gold, so splendid that they quite outshone the French court. Henry met her at Lyons, but he did not find her very pleasing.

He was a man of a warm heart, and as he never loved either of his wives, he sought pleasure by loving other women, on whom he wasted money, and to whom he allowed too much influence in affairs.

Reforms of Henry IV. and Sully.—The long civil war had left France in a condition which made a strong government necessary, if there was to be order. Henry IV. made no pretence of allowing the people to manage things for themselves. He summoned no Estates-General, but showed in everything that he

meant to have his own way. Sully was very clever at money matters, and lessened the expenses of the government, whilst he got in more money from the country. He did much to encourage agriculture; and the peasants, who had suffered terribly in the war, were once more able to till their land in peace.

Henry IV. was much interested in manufactures, about which Sully did not care. The king insisted that mulberry-trees should be planted everywhere, even in the royal gardens, and silk-weaving began to flourish at Lyons. Manufactories of carpets, glass, and pottery were started. Henry also did much to improve the city of Paris, and added largely to the Louvre, which became a most magnificent palace. He kept under arms some regiments of soldiers, which were the beginning of the French standing army, though he still hired foreign soldiers for his wars.

Assassination of Henry IV.—It was not to be expected that the land would settle down easily after all its troubles, and there were many who were discontented with the government. Plots were made against Henry, and several times in his life people tried to murder him. Spain was always his enemy, and tried to stir up his subjects against him, so that at last he decided to make war on Spain. Before he started for the war he went in his coach to say good-bye to Sully; a block in the street stopped the coach, and at that moment a man named Ravallac sprang upon the king, who was reading a letter, and gave him two blows with a dagger, so that Henry fell back dead.

It is said that, that very morning, Henry had said to one of his courtiers: 'I shall die one of these days,

and when you have lost me, you will know what I was worth, and the difference there is between me and other men.' He had done great things for France, and it would have been well for her if he had lived longer, and the crown had not again fallen to a child.

CHAPTER XXII

CARDINAL RICHELIEU

Louis XIII., 1610-1643.—Henry IV.'s son, Louis XIII., was not nine years old when he came to the throne. His mother, Mary of Medicis, succeeded in having herself named Regent. She was a feeble woman, who was ruled in everything by her Italian foster-sister and her husband, the Count and Countess Concini. It seemed as if all the work of Henry IV. was to be undone. The nobles began to do as they liked, and would only submit to the queen-mother and Concini in return for large sums of money. The treasure collected with so much care by Sully was wasted on them, and when there was no more money to be got, they revolted and asked for a meeting of the States-General to reform abuses. They were bribed to make peace, and the States-General assembled. Its time was wasted by quarrels between the three orders of which it was made up, clergy, lords, and commons, and it separated without doing anything.

Assassination of Concini, 1617.—Instead of carrying out the war which Henry IV. had planned against Spain, the Regent arranged peace by means of a double marriage. Louis XIII. married a Spanish princess, Anne of Austria, and his sister was married to a Spanish

prince. The Huguenot party did not like this, and revolted, but this revolt also the Regent put down by bribing its leaders. Concini's insolence disgusted every one with him, and his wife tried to stir up the young king, who had for some time been declared major, against his mother's favourite. Louis XIII. was a dull and melancholy young man; his mother and Concini had kept him from all share in the government. The man whom he liked best was Albert de Luynes, whose business was to take care of the birds which he used for hawking. Louis XIII. made a plan with Luynes and some other courtiers to get rid of Concini, who was shot dead one day as he was entering the palace. The king was quite proud of this murder, and said, 'Now at last I am king!' His mother was exiled to Blois, and Concini's wife was put to death as a sorceress.

Luynes has the chief power.—After that Luynes had everything his own way, and used his power to get riches for himself and his family. Every one who was discontented gathered round the queen-mother. She kept her own little court, where men spent their time amusing themselves with brilliant fêtes, and making plots against the government. Twice war broke out, but the rebels were easily put down. The Huguenots were also discontented, for they were hardly treated by the king. Béarn, the native land of Henry IV., was altogether Huguenot, but there the king set up again by force Roman Catholic worship. So the Huguenots throughout France, fearful of worse things, began to arm and to strengthen the towns, which had been given them by the Edict of Nantes. Louis XIII. and Luynes, whom he made Constable, marched against

some of these towns, and took them, and treated the inhabitants with much cruelty. But Luynes could not take Montauban and La Rochelle, the strongest of the Huguenot towns. Every one abused him for his failure, and the king was growing very tired of his favourite, when Luynes caught a fever and died. After this peace was made with the Huguenots, and the Edict of Nantes was confirmed.

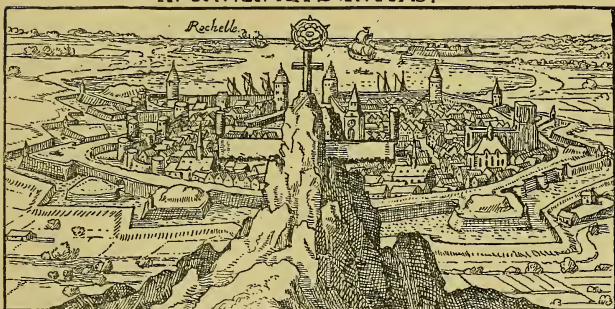
Misery of France.—These useless wars had done no one any good ; the poor had suffered ; the treasure collected by Sully had been wasted. France seemed to be growing of less and less importance in Europe, since, without peace at home, it could play no part in the affairs of the world. It was the quarrels between the different parties in the land, the selfish aims of the nobles, the misery of the poor, which made it now possible, on the ruins of the liberties of the people, to build up a strong government, depending on the king alone. Louis XIII. was not the man to be a great king ; he always had to lean on some one else. At last he found some one to rule for him who was able to make the power of the king supreme over everything in the land.

The Cardinal of Richelieu.—The man whom the king called to his council was the Cardinal of Richelieu. He had come to court first as a follower of the Queen-mother, and though when she lost her power he had to leave the court for a while, he was such a useful, clever man, that the king was glad to have him back. Richelieu was a true statesman. He knew from the first what he wanted to do. He explained his plans to the king with perfect clearness, and steadily carried them out. He meant to put down the Huguenot

party, to put an end to the interference of the nobles with the government, and so to unite France at home, and make it able to resist the influence of Spain and Austria in Europe.

To gain friends for France against Spain, he allowed a marriage to be arranged between Louis XIII.'s sister and Prince Charles of England, who was very angry at his failure to win the Spanish Infanta for his bride.

IN PATIENTIA SVAVITAS.



Qui mala fert malè, fert tempus grave, bisq; dolore. Fit miser: aſi mala qui fert bene, victorabit.

<i>Der Unglück trägt mit vngduld ſehr</i>	<i>Der aber trägt er mit Geduld</i>
<i>Dem wirt es zweimahl noch ſo ſchwer</i>	<i>Überwindlich (bkompt Gottes huld)</i>

LA ROCHELLE.

Neither in France nor England was the marriage of Charles and Henrietta Maria popular, since they did not belong to the same Church, and in the end it added greatly to the difficulties of Charles I.; neither did it bring peace between the two courts.

The taking of La Rochelle, 1628.—The Huguenots had made of La Rochelle an important trading town. Within its walls they were quite inde-

pendent of the French government, and settled their own affairs as they liked. Richelieu determined to put an end to this independence. The people of Rochelle asked the English to help them, and the Duke of Buckingham landed an English army on an island in the harbour. But the French drove him away, and Richelieu caused the town to be completely surrounded. He had earth-works thrown up on the land, and across the mouth of the harbour a mighty mole was made, with a fort at each end, so that the English fleet might not get in or send provisions to the town. The courage of the besieged was admirable; for fourteen months they held out, and resisted all attacks on their walls with the utmost bravery. But famine was a foe against which it was in vain to fight. The starving women and children were sent out of the town, but Louis XIII. was merciless, and would not let them pass his lines, but drove them back into the city. At last, of 30,000 inhabitants only 5000 were left, too few and too weak to bury the heaps of dead who lay in the streets. Then they had to yield. Their walls were rased to the ground, their liberties were taken from them, and La Rochelle never recovered its prosperity. The other strong towns of the Huguenots yielded one by one. Peace was finally signed in 1629, and after this there was no other religious war in France. Richelieu allowed the Huguenots liberty of worship, and treated them like other citizens, but they were no longer a power in the State.

Richelieu puts down the Nobles.—As was natural, the nobles and courtiers were jealous of Richelieu's power. Constant attempts were made to put him down. The Queen-mother, Mary of Medicis, the Queen, Anne of Austria, the King's brother, Gaston of Orleans,

all hated him, and helped the other discontented people in their plots. Richelieu was very severe to those who were found conspiring against the government. At different times several great nobles were put to death, and others thrown into prison. The Queen-mother, who had first brought Richelieu to court, had expected that he would do as she wished, and when she found that he paid no heed to her, she determined to ruin him. She came once to Louis XIII. when he was ill, and in a storm of tears and passion begged him to send away this ungrateful servant. The King promised to do as she wished, and every one thought that the Cardinal's fall was certain. Richelieu began to pack his goods and to prepare to leave Paris; the courtiers crowded to pay their respects to the Queen-mother, since they expected that now she would be the most important person in the government. But one courtier, who was wiser than the rest, showed the King what ruin he would bring if he gave way to the caprices of his mother, and advised Richelieu to come and speak to the King. When Richelieu arrived, Louis XIII. said to him: 'Continue to serve me as you have done, and I will defend you against those who have sworn your ruin.' Richelieu was strong enough to punish those who had plotted against him, and the Queen-mother fled to Brussels, where she lived miserably under the protection of the Spaniards till her death.

One by one Richelieu triumphed over all who tried to go against him. He also did much to put an end to the quarrels amongst the nobles and courtiers, and to the duels, which were very frequent, and were often little better than murders. The fortifications of many of the great castles of the nobles were destroyed; and

as Richelieu thought that it put too much power into the hands of any one man to make him Constable or Admiral, he did away with these two offices. Neither did he allow the lawyers who sat in the Parlements to interfere in public affairs. He sent royal officers, called *intendants*, into the provinces to watch how justice was administered and taxes were collected. Thus more and more everything was managed by the central government, and the King's power made itself felt everywhere.

Foreign Affairs.—One of Richelieu's chief aims was to make France a great power in Europe. Since the days when the Emperor Charles v. had ruled over Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands, these wide lands had been ruled by princes of the same family, the house of Austria, which was so great and strong that no other power in Europe seemed able to resist it. The way in which the Protestants were treated in Germany led them to rise against the Emperor, and thus began what is known as the 'Thirty Years' War (1618). At first things went badly for the Protestants, but when their cause seemed hopeless, help came to them from the outside. The hero of the North, Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, for the love of the reformed religion, put himself at their head, and Richelieu, after first helping them with money, at last made France declare war against the Emperor. Thus Richelieu, by his hatred of the house of Austria, was led to make friends with the Protestants in Germany, though he had put down the Huguenots in France. He and his allies were on the whole successful in the war, and it was then that France began to stretch her borders to the west, for Richelieu was able to occupy

the land of Alsace with his troops. France had been little thought of when Richelieu began this war, but in it he had shown how powerfully she could interfere in the affairs of Europe.

Death of Richelieu, 1642.—Richelieu died whilst the war was still going on. He had raised France from the weakness into which the religious wars had plunged her, to be the first power in Europe. During the next century it was not the house of Austria but the house of Bourbon that led the affairs of Europe. But though Richelieu did so much for the glory of France, he did not add much to the happiness of the mass of the French people. He needed vast sums of money, and he was not clever about money matters as Sully had been, so that the government was always in debt, and the people were very heavily taxed. It was the artisans and the peasants who had to pay all the taxes, and they were so miserably poor and wretched that they rose against the government several times, but were put down without pity.

But if Richelieu did not help the poor, in every other way he made France glorious. He was the friend of art and letters. In his time some of the greatest French writers began to flourish, and he founded a famous institution, called the French Academy. It was a union of writers who were to watch over the purity of the French language; and to this day the greatest honour that can be paid to a French writer is to make him a member of the Academy.

Richelieu had done as he promised. Men feared him, but did not love him, and he could say with truth on his deathbed that he had had no enemies but the enemies of the State. Louis XIII. only lived five

months after his minister. His chief merit is that he submitted to Richelieu. He seems to have found life so tiresome, that his only wish was to get through the days with as little trouble as possible.



ARMS OF LA ROCHELLE.

CHAPTER XXIII

EARLY YEARS OF LOUIS XIV

Anne of Austria becomes Regent, 1643.—Louis XIII. had been married for many years before he had any children ; and his son Louis XIV. was only five years old when he became king, so that the land once more had to go through the troubles of a minority. The little King's mother, Anne of Austria, had herself named Regent. She had hated Richelieu, but still she thought that the man who could help her best in the government was one of his followers, Cardinal Mazarin, an Italian. Mazarin was not proud and stern like Richelieu ; he lived quietly, and pretended to be very humble, and tried to win people by flattery. Working under Richelieu, he had learnt to understand foreign affairs, and so carried on the war successfully. Two of the greatest generals that France has ever had, helped to make the new reign glorious. These were Turenne and the young Duke of Enghien, known after his father's death as the great Condé.

The Battle of Rocroy, 1643.—Enghien was only about twenty years old, and full of the daring of youth. He came upon the Spanish army at Rocroy, near the northern border of France. It was believed that no one could vanquish the Spanish foot-soldiers,

and they stood quiet, waiting to be attacked. Enghien dashed his troops upon them. Thrice the Spaniards drove them back, but the fourth time they broke and fled. This beginning was followed by other victories. Turenne, a more prudent general, was equally successful, and in 1648 the Emperor was obliged to make peace. This peace, known as the Treaty of Westphalia, brought the Thirty Years' War to an end, and gave to France the bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, and all Alsace except Strassburg. By this war the power of the house of Austria was entirely broken; France had now no rival to fear in Germany. The war between Spain and France went on still for some years.

St. Vincent de Paul.—The war had lasted long and cost much money. Mazarin was not clever about money matters, and had no care for the sufferings of the poor, who were terribly taxed. In their misery they found one true friend, a priest named Vincent de Paul. He might have risen high in the service of the court, but he chose to serve the poor. He wandered through the land preaching and teaching, and bade the poor suffer in patience. He got others to join him, and gathered a society of women, called Sisters of Charity, to nurse the sick and teach the children. He also founded homes for orphans and deserted children, and for poor old people.

The Fronde, 1648.—The people of the towns were not willing to put up with the heavy taxes. Mazarin was unpopular because he was a foreigner, and because he loved money and grew rich, whilst the State was ruined. In the midst of the general discontent, the Parlement of Paris tried to make itself important by going against the government and asking

for reforms. They raised an army to help them, and once more civil war began in France. This war was nicknamed at the time, the Fronde, which was the name of the slings with which boys played in the streets and which the police had forbidden. It was a foolish and childish war, in which no one really knew what he was fighting for, and men changed sides constantly. At first it was the Parlement and people of Paris against the court. The chief leader in Paris was the Cardinal de Retz, a man who had been sent to help the Archbishop of Paris; he could speak very well, and was a kindly, warm-hearted man, so that the people loved him. But he was not wise. Enghien, now Prince of Condé, helped the court to get the better of the rebels, and then was angry because he did not think the court rewarded him enough. So he and many of the great people joined the rebels, and the young King, with his mother and Mazarin, had to flee from Paris and its neighbourhood. The wars of the Fronde lasted altogether four years; the great ladies of the time, Condé's sister and the King's cousin, took part in them. Peace was made once or twice, and there was a good deal of fighting.

Peace of the Pyrenees, 1659.—At last Condé made himself hateful to the Parisians, who were glad to welcome back Louis XIV. and his mother, and Mazarin was again triumphant. Condé disgraced himself by making friends with Spain, and gave several French towns into the hands of the Spaniards. But the government had another great general, Turenne, to fight for them; and Spain was so worn out with the long war that at last she consented to sign the peace of the Pyrenees, in 1659. This peace also added new lands to France; Roussillon and Cerdagne in the south,

and Artois in the north. Louis XIV. was married to Maria Theresa, daughter of the Spanish king, but agreed that the children that he might have, should never claim any right to the crown of Spain through their mother. This renunciation of the claim to succession, as it was called, is important to notice, for later on Louis XIV. refused to abide by it, and so brought about a great European war.

The peace of the Pyrenees brought great glory to Mazarin, and he kept his power till his death, two years after. The young King, though now old enough to govern for himself, was willing to be guided by Mazarin, and learnt from him to understand European affairs, and the great part that France might play in them.

Death of Mazarin, 1661.—When Mazarin died, Louis XIV. surprised every one by saying, that he did not mean to have a chief minister any more, but would manage things himself. People had been long accustomed to see the King live in ease or pleasure, and let his minister govern for him; they could not believe at first that Louis XIV. would be willing to prefer a life of work to a life of pleasure. But Louis XIV. had a great idea of the dignity of a king; he thought that his power came from God, and that what he did must be right. At the same time he thought much of the duties of a king. He worked hard, arranging his time carefully, and meeting his ministers in council at fixed times. He demanded that he should be treated with great reverence, and it was impossible to flatter him too much; but he was courteous to all, and his court set the example of those fine manners for which the French are famous. Glory was the object of his life, and all

his efforts were directed to make himself the great king of a great nation, which should take the lead in Europe. He succeeded, partly because of the labours of those who had gone before him, partly because the other European nations were at that time, for various reasons, crushed and feeble, and partly because of his own abilities; but his success was the ruin of his country, since he laboured for glory rather than for his people's good.

The young King was at once immensely popular. People were ready to believe everything that was good of him. He behaved with great caution at first, and no one could tell whom he meant to trust. Fouquet, the minister of finance, hoped that he would be the King's chief adviser. He used his office so as to grow immensely rich himself, and he helped so many to grow rich in dishonest ways, that he was surrounded by friends.

Jean Baptiste Colbert.—But Mazarin had left behind another follower, Jean Baptiste Colbert, a man of humble birth, who had raised himself by his own talents and industry. Colbert was honest in days when every official grew rich from public money, and he was so industrious that he is said to have worked sixteen hours a day. He was eager for the prosperity of his country, and, by studying the life and acts of Richelieu, hoped to be able to copy the great man whom he admired. Mazarin had recommended him to Louis XIV., and Colbert knew well the dishonesty of Fouquet, and told Louis of it. Louis wished to see for himself the magnificence of Fouquet, and accepted an invitation to a fête at his great palace of Vaux. It was the wonder of the day—a park full of terraces and fountains and

rare trees and flowers, containing a truly fairy palace full of marbles and statues and pictures. All the great artists of the time had helped to adorn it. A comedy by the greatest of French writers, Molière, was played for the amusement of the King. But wherever he turned, Louis was offended by the device chosen by Fouquet: a squirrel, with the motto, 'Whither will he not rise?' Indeed, the King was so angry with the arrogance of the minister that he very nearly had him arrested on the spot; but he was persuaded to wait for a better moment. A fortnight after Fouquet was suddenly imprisoned. In his trial it was shown how he had robbed the State, and the wretched man was kept in prison for the rest of his life, which lasted nineteen years.

Colbert now became the chief minister, and he was able to do much for the good of the country. He improved the ways of raising money, so that the taxes might not be so terribly heavy for the poor. He encouraged trade and manufacture; many of the most famous industries of France, such as the Gobelins tapestries and the china of Sèvres, were started by his care. He improved the roads, and made canals and new harbours. Before his day France had very few ships, either for trade or for war, and most of the French trade was done in Dutch ships. Colbert encouraged the building of ships both for trade and for war, and for the first time France had a great navy. In all these ways Colbert did much to increase the wealth of the country. It needed all his efforts to get enough money, for the King's wants could never be satisfied.

Court of Louis XIV.—Louis XIV. made his court the most splendid in the world. All the great people in the land came there. This was not good for the

country, for the great lords lost all interest in their own estates when they no longer lived on them, and only cared to wring money from their farmers, so as to make a great show at court. The princes and princesses, who were related to the royal family, each had their trains of lords and ladies in waiting; but all strove first to please the King, who was looked upon as the sun from whom came all the light of the court. Except during the hours when he was busy with his ministers, Louis XIV. lived amongst his courtiers, and shared their pleasures. Whilst he was being dressed in the morning, his room was crowded with those who wished to see and talk with him. He was gracious and friendly to all, and set an example of elegant and dignified manners. The chief pleasures of the court were gambling, dancing, and play-acting. Molière, the great writer of comedies, lived in the days of Louis XIV., and many of his comedies were for the first time performed before the King. Racine was another of the great dramatists of this time. Never before had there been so many great writers in France, and they were all encouraged and rewarded by the King, who liked to see clever men at his court.

Versailles.—Louis XIV did not like Paris, and decided to make Versailles, where there was only a hunting-box, a fit home for his splendid court. Immense works were undertaken there, and since water was wanting for lakes and fountains, it was brought by wonderful contrivances from a great distance. The walls of the palace were covered with paintings, and the rooms were adorned with statues. The sums which Louis spent on this and other palaces were enormous, and helped in the end to ruin his people.

War with Spain, 1667.—But it was not only for such purposes that Louis needed money; he was planning wars which were to give him new lands, and he was determined that every one should honour him as the greatest king in Europe. His first desire was to win from Spain some of its lands on the French border. These were that part of the Netherlands which we now call Belgium, which had been kept by Spain when the northern part, Holland, had freed itself from her after the religious wars; and Franche Comté, a large province on the borders of France, south of Alsace.

Louvois makes the French Army.—Louis XIV. was well prepared to make war. His minister of war, Louvois, had improved the army immensely. Louvois had no care for the real good of his country; he was a brutal, violent man, but he was very hardworking, and eager to help the King to win glory. To him the first greatness of the French army is due. He it was who made all the soldiers wear uniforms, to show that they were all the servants of the same King. He would not allow the young nobles to be useless, idle officers, but insisted that they should learn their business. He took care for the feeding of the troops, so that great armies could easily be moved about in France; and there were always large numbers of soldiers ready to do the bidding of the King. Louis also had great generals to lead his armies. He himself went with the army which was to invade Flanders, and with him went Turenne, one of the best of his generals, from whom the King wished to learn the art of war; whilst the great Condé led another army into Franche Comté. Everywhere his arms were successful. With the help of the engineer Vauban, one of the greatest men of his day, he took

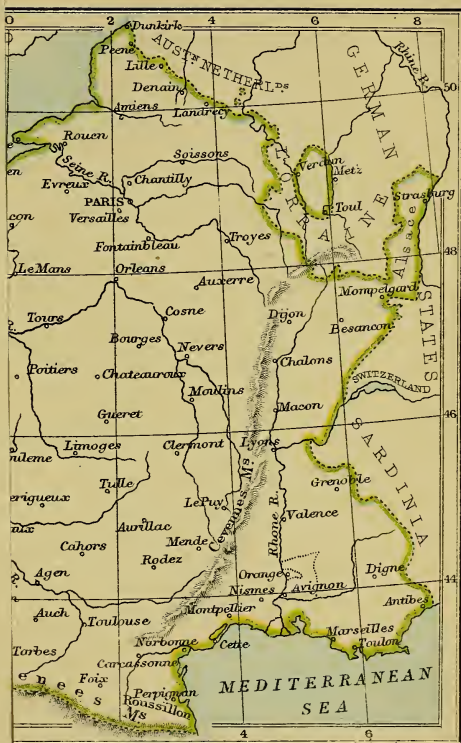
Lille and the other border fortresses in Flanders. They were afterwards fortified with such skill by Vauban, that it was almost impossible for any invader to take them.

William of Orange.—After a few months of war, Spain was ready to make peace on any terms ; but the other powers of Europe were frightened at Louis's success, and Holland formed a league with England and Sweden to help Spain. Charles II. was then king of England. He was at heart a Roman Catholic, and wished to be free from the control of Parliament, that he might declare his religion and do as he liked. Louis XIV. easily won him over to his side, and in a secret treaty promised to pay him a pension every year, so that he might be able to do without the money grants of Parliament. Sweden also was won over, and Holland was left alone to face the anger of the great King. At the head of a large army, Louis invaded Holland, which was soon reduced to despair, and offered to give up many places in return for peace. But Louis was not satisfied, and asked for more. Then despair gave the Dutch new courage ; they rose against their rulers, the De Witts, who were killed in a riot, and William of Orange was proclaimed Stadtholder ; he was the descendant of that other William of Orange who had saved Holland from the Spaniards. This young man was all his life to be the enemy of Louis XIV. At first he saved his country from the invader by cutting the dykes, which kept out the sea from those flat lands, so that the water flowed in everywhere, the towns became islands, and the French were forced to retire before the water. But William knew that he could not stand alone against Louis XIV., and from that moment he

made it his business to raise up enemies to France in all the lands of Europe, so that the weak, by joining together, might grow strong enough to be able to resist the power of Louis XIV. Spain and Austria joined in making war on France ; and even Charles II. was forced by Parliament to make friends with William, and give him his niece Mary as wife. But though Louis was left alone he was almost everywhere successful. The war lasted for five years. In the course of it, Turenne, adored by his soldiers, who were ready to follow him anywhere, was killed in battle, and Condé, grown old and infirm, retired from the army. They were succeeded by the Marquis of Luxemburg and other generals.

Peace of Nimeguen, 1678.—At last peace was signed at Nimeguen, and Spain had to give up Franche Comté and many towns in Flanders, which were fortified by Vauban so as to make a strong barrier for France in the north. This peace marks the most glorious moment of Louis XIV.'s reign. He now really felt that he was the sun whose rays were to lighten the whole civilised world, and that there would be no limits to his glory.

Even in the time of peace he managed to add to his dominions. Magistrates were named to decide exactly the borders of the new lands given to France by the treaty, and they claimed towns and occupied them with French troops, just because no one was strong enough to resist them. The chief town gained in this way was Strassburg, a free German city in Alsace, with a famous cathedral. Louvois persuaded a number of men who were friendly to France to open the gates of the city to French soldiers, and Louis XIV. went himself, followed by all his court, to take possession of this conquest, which he had made in full time of peace.



a & Co., London, New York & Bombay.





Creighton's France, p. 208.

Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York & Bombay.



Death of Colbert, 1683.—These wars cost much money, and the king's buildings and fêtes took an immense deal more, and all this Colbert had to find. He had worked hard to pay the debts left by former ministers, and now he was obliged to make debts himself. In vain he urged the king to spend less; all that followed was that the king grew angry with him, whilst the people hated him for the heavy taxes which he was forced, against his will, to lay upon them. Worn out by work and anxiety, he died in 1683, and was followed to his grave by the curses of the people. But he was the truest friend France had in those days, and to him the country owed the prosperity of the first part of Louis XIV.'s reign.

CHAPTER XXIV

WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685.—By the Edict of Nantes Henry IV. had given the Huguenots many privileges; but Louis XIV. thought it necessary to his glory that in his land all should be of the same religion as their king. He allowed the magistrates and officials in the provinces to trouble the Huguenots as much as they chose. Colbert had done all he could to protect the Huguenots from persecution, but when he was dead, and Louis XIV. had triumphed over all his enemies abroad, he determined to triumph also over the enemies of his religion at home. At first every possible way was used to force the Huguenots to change their religion; some were persuaded, others were bribed. Children were stolen from Huguenot parents, that they might be brought up in Roman Catholic convents and schools. Then Louvois invented a terrible way of forcing conversions. He marched his soldiers into the districts where most of the inhabitants were Huguenots, and lodged them in the houses, with orders to use every means in their power to compel their hosts to change their religion. In this way unhappy people were robbed, ill-treated, tortured, until in their despair thousands were ready to promise

anything their persecutors asked. Some rose in revolt, and were put down with much cruelty and bloodshed. Great numbers fled from France, and though the borders and the sea-ports were watched to prevent their escape, despair showed them how to find a way.

At last Louis decided to do away with the Edict of Nantes altogether, since, as he was told, most of the Huguenots had left their religion, and it was therefore no more needed. Henceforth the Huguenots were not to be allowed to have their own churches, or hold their own services, nor might they even be legally married. Then more and more of the Huguenots fled from the land where they could no longer find a home. They were the most industrious and intelligent part of the population, and they carried to other lands the clever hands and thoughtful heads which had done so much to improve the arts and manufactures of France. Thousands of French Protestants settled in Holland, England, and Germany. They taught their industries to the workmen of the lands which gave them shelter. France not only lost their work, but other lands were no longer forced to come to France for goods, which they now learnt to make themselves. It was natural, too, that the Huguenots should feel a bitter hatred for the king, who had driven them from their homes and country; and in the new lands where they settled they did all they could to help the enemies of Louis XIV. Thus the revocation of the Edict of Nantes marks the beginning of evil days for France. By it Louis made his own land poorer, and enriched the lands of his enemies, while he turned the most industrious and peaceful of his people into bitter enemies. He deceived himself, however, by thinking that he was adding to

his glory by showing that in France there was one king, one law, and one religion.

A new Coalition against France, 1688.—William of Orange meanwhile again succeeded in binding the enemies of Louis XIV. together, and had a new reason of his own for making war. At the invitation of many leading Englishmen, he landed in England, to free the land from the evil government of James II., his father-in-law. James found no one to help him, and fled to France, where Louis XIV. received him kindly, and promised to set him on his throne again. William and his wife Mary were made by Parliament King and Queen of England, and thus England was joined to the countries who combined against France.

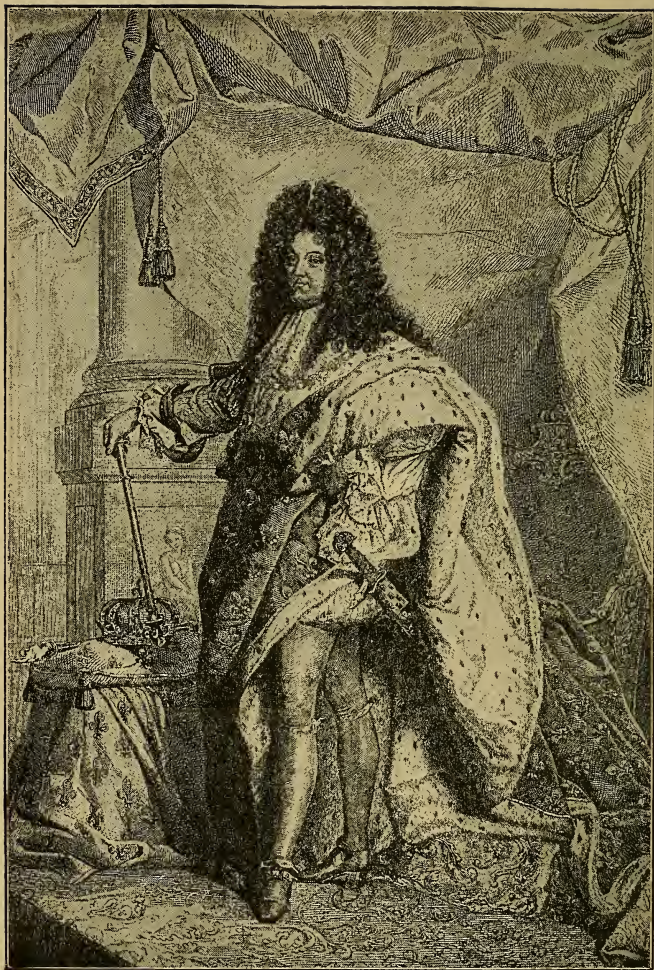
For eleven years the war lasted, and the French general Luxemburg won some great victories. He invaded Germany, and ravaged the country in the most cruel way, so as to make it impossible for the armies of his enemies to find food there. All the towns and villages in the district called the Palatinate were burnt, and the sufferings of the people made the name of Louis XIV. hated in Europe. At sea, the French fleet was defeated by the English at La Hogue, and this prevented Louis XIV. from doing much to help James II. But on land, William was always unsuccessful against Luxemburg.

Treaty of Ryswick, 1697.—France suffered terribly from the long war. Since Colbert's death no minister had known how to manage the money affairs; the taxes were so heavy that most of the people were no better than beggars, and were not even able to cultivate the land. Louis XIV. at last felt himself obliged to ask for peace, and a treaty was signed at

Ryswick in Holland in 1697, which obliged Louis to give up all that he had won since the last peace, except Strassburg, and to recognise William of Orange as king of England.

War of the Spanish Succession, 1700.—Three years after this peace the king of Spain, Charles II., died. This was a moment to which Louis XIV. had long looked forward. You will remember that when Louis married the king of Spain's sister, he promised not on that account, to claim any right for himself and his children to the Spanish succession. But in spite of his promise, Louis had got Charles II., who had no children, to make a will in which he named as his successor his great-nephew, the grandson of Louis XIV. and Maria Theresa. Louis XIV. paid no heed to his promise, and sent his grandson to Spain, where he became king as Philip V. Then Louis XIV. was able to say in triumph, 'The Pyrenees no longer exist,' since a French prince was sitting on the Spanish throne.

The Grand Alliance.—All Europe was terrified to see the importance of France so much increased, and once more William got the other powers to combine against Louis XIV., and to form what was called the Great Alliance. He did not live to begin the war himself, and finish the work of his life. But he left behind him a man who understood his ideas, and was better able than himself to carry on the war. This was the Duke of Marlborough, who was made General-in-chief of the English army by Queen Anne. The war which now began was the greatest of all the wars in which Louis XIV. was engaged. It was carried on at the same time in the Netherlands, in Germany, in



LOUIS XIV.

Spain, and in Italy. The English and the Dutch could not supply many soldiers, but they gave money to help to pay the armies of their allies. At first the French won some successes, but when they were going to invade Austria, which seemed to lie helpless before them, Marlborough, by a rapid march, put himself in their way. He was joined by the Austrian general, Prince Eugene, and together they utterly defeated the French army in the battle of Hochstadt, or Blenheim, on the banks of the Danube.

It was the first time that Louis XIV.'s armies had been seriously defeated, and the court was plunged into despair at the news. Other defeats followed. Prince Eugene drove the French from Italy. Marlborough drove them from the Netherlands, and in Spain too the allies were victorious. In France there was terrible distress. There was no money to pay the troops, no food for the people; the lackeys might be seen begging at the doors of the king's palace, and the ladies of the court ate black bread. At last the enemy invaded France itself.

The Peace of Utrecht, 1713.—A terribly cold winter added to the miseries of the country; the frost killed the olive-trees and vines in the south, and the fruit-trees in the north. The general distress forced Louis XIV. to humble himself and ask for peace. But the allies made such hard conditions that he could not accept them. Louis showed real courage in his misfortunes; he called upon his people to help him in a last effort against his enemies, and the country answered to his call, and was willing to make any sacrifice. Before advancing farther into France, Marlborough had to take Lille and the other great towns which Vauban

had fortified on the border, and this took two years. Meanwhile England was growing tired of the war, and Marlborough had lost his favour with Queen Anne. He was disgraced, and lost the command of the army, and England began to treat for peace with Louis XIV. Peace was signed with England at Utrecht in 1714, and with Austria in the following year. Louis' grandson, Philip V., was allowed to keep the crown of Spain, but Louis XIV. had to give the Netherlands to Austria, and some of his colonies in America to England. Europe was no longer humbled at the feet of France.

The last years had been very sad for Louis XIV. In 1711, his only son, the Dauphin, had died. The next year the Dauphin's eldest son, the Duke of Burgundy, and his wife, who were both much beloved, and who were expected to bring happy days to France, died within a few days of one another. Shortly afterwards their eldest son died also, and their second son, the Duke of Anjou, a child of five years old, survived as the sole descendant of his great-grandfather, Louis XIV., with the exception of the king of Spain.

Madame de Maintenon.—Louis XIV.'s old age was thus very sad. His queen had died many years before, and he had married secretly Madame de Maintenon, a lady of the court, who was some years older than himself. He never owned her as his wife, but he used to spend many hours every day in her rooms, and discussed all the affairs of his kingdom in her presence. She was a serious person, and professed to be very religious. She made the king also very devout, and the persecutions of the Huguenots were very much owing to her influence. The court grew much more quiet and serious. No one could hope to get on who

had not Madame de Maintenon's favour, and she seems to have ruled the king pretty much as she liked.

Death of Louis XIV., 1715.—The end of the war left the country in a miserable state. Vauban has given an account of it, in which he says that the tenth part of the people were beggars, and there were only 10,000 families in the land who could live in comfort. It was in this sad state that Louis XIV. left his country. He died at the age of seventy-seven, after a reign of seventy-two years. In this long reign, France had passed through a period of great glory, which might have lasted longer if Louis XIV. had understood better the real interests of his people, and had striven less for his own personal glory.

The splendour of the great days of Louis XIV. can never be forgotten, owing to the great poets and writers who lived in what is always known as the century of Louis XIV. His court was also adorned by some of the finest preachers whom the world has ever known, especially Bossuet and Fénelon, and other great churchmen famous for their eloquence and learning. The magnificence of the French court, and the great men who lived in it, gave France a great influence in Europe, and other countries and other writers looked upon France as the model of all that was elegant and refined.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DECAY OF THE MONARCHY

Louis XV., 1715-1774.—Louis XIV. was succeeded by his great-grandson, Louis xv., who was only five years old when he became king. He reigned nearly sixty years, and this long reign was for France a time of misery at home and humiliation abroad. The vices and bad government of the king disgusted the French with the monarchy, just at a time when many clever writers and thinkers who arose in France, were teaching that all men should be free and equal, and that it was a hateful state of things which obliged all to submit to the will of one man and of his ministers. The evils of this reign helped to bring on a violent change in the French form of government. But the first causes of the change must be looked for far earlier, in the days when powerful kings and greedy nobles put down the rights of the people, and when Richelieu and Louis XIV. made everything depend upon the will of one man. When power was in the hands of a man like Louis xv. the evils of such a form of government was clearly seen.

The Regency.—Louis xv.'s mother was dead, and his nearest relation, Philip, Duke of Orleans, nephew of Louis XIV., had himself declared Regent. He was a

clever man by nature, but spoilt by a vicious life and a mad love of pleasure. He cared nothing for religion, and had surrounded himself in the Palais Royal, where he lived, with a crowd of vicious and corrupt men who lived to amuse themselves. Louis XIV.'s court had been of late years very strict, and men had been forced to profess religion, even if they did not feel it. Now all was changed, and men might sin as openly as they liked. The Regent let the chief power fall into the hands of a man named Dubois, who had been his tutor, and afterwards the sharer of his vicious pleasures. Dubois was a mean-looking little man, and it was said that all the vices fought in him, which should remain master. Little by little Dubois got the position of chief minister, and had himself made Bishop of Cambrai, and at last, by threats and promises, the Pope was forced to make him a Cardinal.

Under such a government there could be nothing but misery for the country. At home there was suffering from the heavy taxes and the evil means used to get money. In foreign matters the Regent and Dubois went contrary to all the plans of Louis XIV. They made friends with England, and made war on Spain, though the Regent's own cousin was king of Spain, and Louis XIV. had hoped that the countries would be so firmly united that henceforth, as he had said, there would be no Pyrenees. Spain fell so low that it was never afterwards able to take a leading part in Europe.

Majority of Louis XV.—At thirteen the young king was declared of age to rule, but this made no change, and Dubois continued first minister till his own folly brought about his death. He posed as being as great a man as Richelieu, and wanted to imitate

him by reviewing in person the troops of the king's household. He did not know how to ride, and the troops were much amused by his absurd appearance. He was shaken by his horse in such a way as to receive a hurt from which he died. The Duke of Orleans only survived him for a few months, and died in 1723, having held the chief power for eight years.

The Duke of Bourbon.—Even worse days were to follow. The only person for whom the young king cared at all was his tutor, Fleury, a worthy old bishop. By his advice the Duke of Bourbon, a relative of the royal family, was made chief minister. He was a coarse, cruel, bad man. Under his rule all the old evils went on, and besides, the Huguenots in the south of France were persecuted with horrible cruelty. By the orders of a minister whose life was marked with every vice, the Huguenots were forbidden to hold their services even in their own houses. When they fled to desert places for prayer and preaching, they were pursued by the soldiers. They were not even allowed to die in peace, for they were forced to confess to a priest on their deathbed. Neither could they be married except by a Catholic priest, and he would refuse to marry them, unless they gave up their religion and cursed their Huguenot parents.

Marriage of Louis XV.—The Duke of Bourbon did not like Fleury's influence with the king. He thought that if Louis xv. was married, he would perhaps listen more to his wife than to his old tutor, so he chose as wife for him Maria Leczinska, the daughter of an exiled king of Poland. As she was a person of no importance, Bourbon expected her to be so grateful to him that she would help him in his plans.

But she was a quiet, gentle lady, seven years older than her boy husband, who never cared about her at all, and so she was of no use to Bourbon.

At last Bourbon's government grew so bad, that Fleury made the king dismiss him, and he was exiled from court, to every one's satisfaction.

Fleury Chief Minister.—Fleury now decided to manage things himself. He was an old man of sixty-three, and all he desired was to have rest for himself and for the country. His rule was not glorious, and the gay people at the court and the clever people in Paris laughed at him; but economy made the country more prosperous, and the way in which trade and commerce revived during a few years of peace showed how rich France really was, and how happy the people might be if only they were well governed.

War of the Polish Succession, 1733–1738.—But Fleury was at last forced to make war to put Stanislaus, the king's father-in-law, on the Polish throne. In this war France was successful, for though Stanislaus did not keep his kingdom, he was granted by the Emperor the duchy of Lorraine for his lifetime, and at his death Lorraine was to be added to France, which had always been the aim of Louis XIV.

The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740.—Only two years of peace followed, before Europe was disturbed by another war. The Emperor Charles VI. died, and left only a daughter, Maria Theresa. He had got promises from the princes of Europe that they would let her succeed him in peace; but as soon as he was dead, every one began to think what a good chance this would be, to get some of the lands of the house of Austria for themselves. The young French nobles

were eager for war, and they persuaded Fleury to join the enemies of Maria Theresa and invade Austria. The English helped Maria Theresa, and in the course of the war, did much harm to the French navy and colonies. The only person who gained anything from this war was Frederick II., king of Prussia. Prussia was just growing into importance. In 1701 the Elector of Brandenburg had been allowed to take the title of king of Prussia. Frederick II. was the third king; he was a great general, determined to win new lands and power, and succeeded in taking the province of Silesia from Maria Theresa.

During this war Fleury died, and Louis xv. declared that he would now govern for himself, and even set out to join the army. At Metz he fell dangerously ill, and for a time every one thought he would die. Then the old enthusiasm for their king arose again in the minds of the French, and when Louis xv. recovered people in their joy gave him the surname, *Bien-aimé*. He said when he heard it: 'What have I done to be loved like this?' It would have been well for him to have died then, and not to have lived to earn the hatred of his people.

Madame de Pompadour.—After his recovery the king joined the army, and was present when the French won a great victory over the English at Fontenoy. But no good came to the French from this success. Louis xv. had never loved his wife, but amused himself with the ladies of the court, and made favourites of them. At this time a lady named Madame de Pompadour managed to make him so fond of her that he was ready to do anything she asked. She was tired of life in the camp, where she had followed the king, and insisted that peace should

be made. A congress was held at Aix-la-Chapelle to settle the terms of peace, and Madame de Pompadour told the French ambassadors that they must make peace, whatever was asked of them. So a peace was made, in which the French gave up all that they had won at the cost of so many lives and so much money.

Seven Years of Peace.—For seven years there was peace in Europe, and though France was no better governed, and the manner of life of the king was a disgrace, yet the rich products of the land, the growth of its commerce and its colonies, made France prosperous. There were many great French writers living then, chiefly philosophers, men who discussed the evils of the time, the laws of the mind and of nature, and who sought for truth without respect either to the old laws or to religion. Chief amongst these men was Voltaire, who was admired by all Europe, and foreigners crowded to France to see him and the other philosophers. These writers were several times imprisoned, and their books condemned by the government, because their teaching went against religion. But men naturally sympathised with them rather than with the government, for the conduct of the king and his ministers showed that, though they might profess to honour religion, they did not obey its laws.

The Seven Years' War, 1756.—Peace did not last long, for Maria Theresa could not rest whilst Silesia remained in the possession of Frederick II., and the English were watching with jealousy the growth of the French colonies in Canada and India. Maria Theresa asked Louis XV. to join with her in making war on Frederick II. She won over Madame de Pompadour by writing to her with her own hand, flattering her, and

calling her 'my cousin.' So Madame de Pompadour made Louis xv. agree to help her, and England joined with Prussia. This war is called the Seven Years' War. It brought nothing but loss for France. The French had no general equal to Frederick II., and the generals whom they had could not do their best, for Madame de Pompadour directed from Paris the movements of the army. English affairs were at that time managed by the great minister Pitt, and under his care all went well for England. By the famous battle of Quebec, Wolfe, the English general, won Canada from the French; whilst in India, Clive little by little destroyed the power of the French, and won that great empire for the English. Both in Canada and in India, the French had wise and great men as rulers, who aimed at founding mighty colonies for France. But they got no support or help from the government, but rather hindrance, and thus it was through the bad rule of Louis xv. that France lost her colonies.

Treaty of Paris, 1763.—The war was brought to an end by the treaty of Paris, in which France gave up all her colonies. It left France poor and humbled, with a ruined navy. The state of the country was improved during the next ten years by the chief minister, Choiseul. He owed his place to the protection of Madame de Pompadour, but he tried honestly to do his best for the country. He improved the army and the navy, and tried to found a new French colony in Guiana; but his plans were so badly carried out by those to whom he trusted them, that the attempt was a failure.

Madame de Pompadour died, but Choiseul still kept his power. But after a while the king, who cared for

nothing in life but his vile pleasures, allowed some of his worst courtiers to turn him against Choiseul. He wrote a letter to Choiseul, in which, without a word of thanks for his services, he exiled him to his estates. So much was the king despised, that the greater number even of his courtiers sided with the minister and left the court.

Death of Louis XV.—The ministers who succeeded Choiseul brought the government into confusion and contempt. When the Parlement of Paris and some of the Parlements in the provinces tried to oppose them, the ministers broke up the Parlement and exiled its members. There remained really nothing that could be called government. Louis XV. did not care what happened; he said that the existing state of things would last as long as he did. At last, in 1774, his wretched reign came to an end, and he died hated and despised by every one.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE LAST DAYS OF THE MONARCHY

The condition of France.—You have seen how in France by degrees the power of the monarchy grew, until Richelieu and Louis XIV. made all the government centre in the hands of the king. The result was that under a king like Louis XV., the country was left without any government at all. Every one felt that reforms were needed, but there was much difference of opinion as to the kind of reforms. The teaching of the philosophers had had a great deal of influence, and people began to look upon the privileges of the nobles as absurd. The nobles in France were very different from the English nobles. In France all the sons of a nobleman were noble, so that they never got mixed up with other people as they do in England, where the younger sons of a noble are commoners. The French nobles were what is called privileged; they were exempted from most of the taxes, and since Louis XIV. had taken all the government into his own hands, they had no duties, and lived only to amuse themselves. For the most part they led very bad lives, and did nothing to help the almost starving peasants, who toiled in rags and misery on their lands.

The Church.—The clergy were little better. All the great posts in the Church were kept for the younger children of the nobles. Men were made bishops and abbots, and ladies were made abbesses, not because they were fit for the post, but only because they were noble, and some great place had to be found for them. They had large incomes, but the country clergy, who worked hard and were often pious and earnest men, were miserably poor. The clergy, too, were privileged, and had to pay very few taxes.

The People.—Heavy taxes and bad laws had plunged the great mass of the people into misery. Though the soil was rich, the taxes made it impossible for the farmer to make any profit. Bread was dear and scarce, and famine was frequent. Whilst the privileged classes lived in idleness and luxury, the working classes toiled and starved.

The philosophers had been busy teaching men by their writings and their words, how these things could be changed. The young men in the land who could read and think were full of their ideas. Only leaders were needed to show how the changes could be made.

Louis XVI., 1774.—Louis XV. was succeeded by his grandson, Louis XVI., a young man of twenty. He had never expected to come to the throne, and had spent his days in harmless amusements. His favourite occupations were hunting and working with a blacksmith at making locks. He had been married when he was very young to Marie Antoinette, one of the daughters of the Empress Maria Theresa. The French had long been accustomed to look upon the Austrians as their enemies, and they did not like this marriage, nor did Marie Antoinette behave in a way

to win their love. She was bright and lively, and bent on amusing herself. She took violent fancies to some people, and strong dislikes to others. She expected her wishes to be gratified immediately; and her extravagance added to the difficulties of the ministers in finding money for the expenses of the court. She did not like the ceremonious ways of the French court, where everything was decided by strict rules of etiquette, and she behaved with a freedom which offended French taste. At her favourite country-house, called Petit Trianon, she liked to play at being a farmer's wife. She gave open-air fêtes, at which she used to dress herself as a shepherdess and drive a flock of white sheep adorned with ribbons. Her proud spirit made her refuse to listen to any advice, and she was determined to have her own way at any cost. The king was altogether under her influence. He was a good, well-meaning man, and he wished to govern well, but he was weak and indolent. Marie Antoinette had a much stronger will than he, and was able to twist him as she liked. If people would only leave him alone and let him hunt and make locks he was quite content. Some of the locks he made may still be seen at Versailles.

Ministry of Turgot.—Amongst his first ministers, Louis XVI. chose Turgot, one of the wisest thinkers of the times. He knew what thorough changes were needed to make France prosperous, and he set to work at once to try and make them. He wished to do away with the absurd old rules which made it impossible to carry corn for sale from one part of France to another, so that bread was often dear and scarce in some parts, whilst there might be plenty in others. But few people could understand his plans; and when

he began to interfere with the privileges of the nobles they complained loudly to the king. The queen did not like him, because he was always urging economy, and Louis XVI., who did not like to be troubled, at last determined to dismiss Turgot, though he had promised to stand by him in all his reforms.

Ministry of Necker.—Louis XVI. next called a Swiss banker named Necker to manage his finances. Necker was an honest man, and clever in banking business. He did not understand the needs of France as Turgot did, but he tried his best to keep things in order without making any startling changes. For five years he kept his office, and this gave France a little rest.

It was at this time that the English colonies in America, led by George Washington, revolted against the English rule. They sent to ask help from France. The French philosophers, who were always talking and writing about liberty, were full of sympathy with the rebels, and the king thought it a splendid opportunity for humbling England. So French troops were sent to help the Americans, and young Frenchmen fighting under Washington's leadership learnt a new love of liberty. One young nobleman, the Marquis of Lafayette, left the French court only a few days after his marriage that he might go and fight by the side of Washington. In this way some, even of the French nobility, were made to feel that the old state of things to which they were used in France could not last for ever. In 1783 peace was signed at Versailles, and England was obliged to recognise the independence of the United States.

This war had cost a great deal of money. Necker got an idea that it would be well to let people know

how the finances of the government were managed, and in this way to increase their confidence in him. He therefore published a report of the finances. This excited much indignation. In France it had been the custom to keep these things quite secret; now, it was said, Necker wished to imitate the English, and make the king only the servant of his subjects. Necker was obliged to leave the ministry.

Ministry of Calonne.—The next minister of the finances, Calonne, soon got things into worse confusion than ever. He said it was best at any rate to appear rich. He borrowed enormous sums of money for the expenses of the court, and spent money, too, in making canals, and ports, and roads. At last no one would lend him any more money, and then he, too, began to talk of reforms.

A meeting of the nobles was called together to consider his reforms. But they agreed in nothing but in attacking Calonne, who was at last dismissed by the king. One of his opponents succeeded him, and did no better. People began to say that the only way to mend matters was to summon the States-General, which had not met since 1614, and to let the nation itself decide what reforms were needed. At last, in 1788, Louis XVI. decided to bring back Necker, in whose cleverness people had great confidence, and to call together the States-General.

The Elections.—During the winter which followed, the whole country was busy with the elections of the men who were to form the States-General. The nobles chose those who were to represent them, and so did the clergy. The third estate was made up of the great mass of the people, the lawyers, doctors, tradesmen,

and working men. They also chose men to represent them. Besides this, the electors in the different districts drew up lists of their grievances, and of the reforms which they wished their representatives to ask for.

Meeting of the States-General, 5th May 1789.—The States-General met at Versailles, and were opened by the king. Every one, even Louis himself, was full of hope that a new and better state of things was going to begin. But before anything could be done, there were some important points to be settled. The reformers felt that if each of the three estates, that is, the clergy, the nobles, and the people, were to sit separately, none of the changes which they wanted could be carried out, for the clergy and the nobles would never agree to the changes proposed by the third estate. They demanded that all the three estates should sit together; then the Liberals, or reforming party, would be in the majority. Louis would not agree to their demands, and the third estate declared that they would do nothing alone. The man who at once showed that he was most fit to be their leader was himself a noble, the Marquis of Mirabeau. He had led a wild youth, and the nobles would not elect him as one of their representatives; but his eloquence and his sympathy with their needs had won for him the favour of the people, and he had been chosen as a deputy by the third estate. No one was so fit as he to be their leader; he understood what was needed, he could speak and write splendidly, was a great reader, and a man who knew the world.

The Tennis-Court Oath.—Under his guidance the third estate now declared themselves the National Assembly, and invited the clergy and the nobles to

join them. The nobles and clergy were indignant at this act of independence, and the king took their part. He said he would come down and tell the States-General what they were to do. Meanwhile the third estate were shut out from their hall. They were in great excitement, and went together to a neighbouring tennis-court. There, with one voice, they swore that whatever happened they would not separate till they had given France a Constitution. You must understand that they had at this time no wish to do away with the king. They only wished that in France, as in England, there should be laws according to which the king must govern, and that the people should have a share in the government, so that no longer everything should be decided by the king's will alone. The third estate were joined by a few of the nobles who sympathised with them, and by many of the parish priests.

The king did not understand how determined they were. Three days afterwards he came down in state to the States-General, and told them that the three estates were to sit and vote separately, and that they were only to busy themselves with considering the state of the finances. He then bade them retire and meet the next day in their separate halls, and with these words he left. Most of the nobles and the chief clergy followed him. The members of the third estate, with their friends from the other orders, kept their seats. The king's master of the ceremonies asked their president whether he had heard the king's order. Mirabeau answered for him that they had heard the words which had been put into the king's mouth, but that they would not leave their seats except at the bayonet's point. When the king was told that

they would not go, he said, 'Very well, leave them alone.' He was too weak to keep to any purpose for long. After a few weeks, when he saw how determined the people were, he even asked the clergy and nobles to join the third estate, and thus at last the three estates were united, and called themselves the National Assembly.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE REVOLUTION

Dismissal of Necker.—The queen and the court were terrified at the power of the Assembly. They wished the king to be ready to use force against them. Louis listened to their persuasions, and ordered some Swiss and German troops, who were in his pay, to be quartered round Paris and Versailles, that their presence might keep the Assembly and the excited citizens of Paris in order. At the same time Louis also dismissed Necker, since he was tired of his advice, and the queen and her friends hated him.

The Capture of the Bastille.—In the garden of the Palais Royal, a palace belonging to the Duke of Orleans, the king's cousin, in Paris, men use to gather to discuss the questions of the day. Great was the excitement when a young man named Camille Desmoulins jumped upon a table in the middle of the garden and shouted out: 'Citizens! they have driven Necker from office. To arms!' Soon all Paris was in an uproar. The people robbed the bakers' shops and the wine-shops, and carried off arms from the gun-shops and the military storehouses. After three days' disturbance, the fury of the people was turned against the great fortress and prison called the Bastille, in the

centre of Paris. It was connected in the people's minds with the tyranny of the monarchy, since prisoners had frequently been sent there, at the mere command of the king, never to be released again. There was but a small body of soldiers in the Bastille, but its walls were so thick that it seemed impossible for a mere mob to take it. But after it had been attacked for five hours by thousands of the lowest people in Paris, the soldiers within refused to hold it any longer, and forced the governor to surrender. Then the mob swarmed into the Bastille; they let out the prisoners who were there, who were only seven in number. One of them had been there for thirty years, but did not know for what reason. At first the mob spared the governor's life, but afterwards he was killed in the streets, and his head was carried on a pike in triumph.

The National Guard is formed.—Louis XVI. at Versailles was filled with alarm when he heard what the mob had done. Some of the leading courtiers fled from France, and the king agreed to recall Necker and send away the troops from the neighbourhood of Paris. To keep order in Paris the citizens raised a force from amongst their own number, to which the name National Guard was given. They chose the young and popular nobleman, the Marquis of Lafayette, who had fought with Washington in America, to be its commander-in-chief, and a cockade made of red, white, and blue was taken as the distinguishing mark of its members. The citizens of Paris had no government of their own, but now they determined to have a mayor and a town council, and chose a man named Bailly, a learned mathematician, to be their first mayor.

As Louis was not able to prevent the people of Paris

from doing as they liked, he thought it best to seem to approve their doings, and he decided to pay a visit to Paris. He was received by Bailly, the mayor, and in the sight of thousands of the people he fixed a tricolor cockade on his hat, whilst every one shouted 'Vive le Roi!' or 'Vive la nation!' They still hoped that the king would be the head of a new government, which was to bring peace and prosperity to France.

The provinces followed the example of Paris. Everywhere prisons were attacked, national guards organised, mayors chosen. No one paid any heed to the royal officials. The peasants gathered together in bands, and, armed with pikes, attacked the castles of the nobles. Their chief object was to burn the papers on which were written the services which their lords demanded from them, but they often went on to burn and plunder the castles, and sometimes to kill their owners. Many cruel deeds were done in revenge of centuries of oppression, and there was no one with sufficient authority to keep order.

When the Assembly at Versailles heard of the disorders throughout the land, as well as of the general sympathy shown to the revolutionary movement, they felt that they must no longer hesitate, but must go on with the work which they had begun. On the night of the 4th August 1789 they abolished all the privileges of the nobles and the clergy, and declared all men equal before the law. But this did not bring order into the country; the disturbances continued, bread was very dear and scarce, and there were frequent riots caused by hunger. In Paris, excited men formed themselves into clubs, where they discussed all the changes they desired. Numbers of

newspapers were published daily, full of the most violent proposals. There was a general idea that if only the king and the Assembly could be brought to Paris, bread would be cheap, and everything would go well.

The King is brought to Paris.—Early in the morning of the 5th October thousands of hungry women collected in the market-place crying aloud for bread. Some one proposed that they should go to Versailles and carry their demands there. They at once set off to walk, followed by a large mob collected from all parts of Paris. Lafayette was ordered to follow with his National Guards so as to keep order.

The weather was wet, and the women reached Versailles in the afternoon, covered with mud. Some went to the palace, others to the hall where the Assembly was sitting, all clamouring for bread. Lafayette and his guards did not arrive till midnight. He set watches at the palace gates, but at daybreak some of the mob forced their way into the palace, after killing two of the royal guards. They nearly reached the queen's bedroom, but she fled for her life to the king's rooms. Then the crowd gathered in front of the palace, shouting 'The king to Paris!' Louis XVI. stepped out on a balcony with the queen, to show that he consented. Then the mob set out to return in triumph to Paris, taking the king and queen and their children with them. They shouted that now they would have bread in plenty, since they were bringing the baker and the baker's wife and boy. The royal carriages followed the mob, protected by the National Guards.

The royal family were taken to the Tuileries, and

the Assembly, which now followed the king, held its meetings in one of the riding-schools of the palace.

The Constitution.—For a while Lafayette was the hero of Paris, and he and his National Guards kept order in the city. The National Assembly devoted itself to discussing a Constitution: that is to say, a set of laws and customs according to which France should in future be governed. They took away from the king the right to make laws, to fix taxes, to decide peace and war. All titles were done away with; henceforth the nobles were to be simply citizens. No one was to suffer any constraint on account of his religion, but Jews as well as Huguenots might serve in any office in the state. The old division of the country into provinces was done away with. The various provinces had different rights and customs, and even different laws; and trade could not be freely carried on between them, for customs and tolls had to be paid on their borders. Now the whole land was divided into eighty-three different departments, named generally from the rivers which watered them, and as nearly as possible of the same size. In future each district was to be governed in the same manner, by persons elected by the people themselves. In this way everything would no longer depend upon the central government and the officials it sent out. New law courts were set up instead of the old parlements. Neither was the Church left alone; all its property was taken away for the use of the State, and henceforth all the clergy were to be paid by the government. The bishops were to get less, and the parish priests more, than before.

Fête of the Champ de Mars, 1790.—On the 14th July, the anniversary of the day on which the

Bastille had been taken, a great fête was held in Paris. Deputations of the National Guards from all parts of France were invited to it. In the middle of a great open space (called the Champ de Mars) an altar was raised. Here Lafayette, the commander-in-chief of all the National Guards, took an oath to observe the new Constitution. Thousands of voices were raised to take the oath after him. Then the king himself in a clear voice took the oath. The queen lifted the Dauphin in her arms and showed him to the people, as if to say that he too took part in his father's oath. It had been raining before ; but at this moment the sun pierced the clouds and lit up the altar where the *Te Deum* was chanted. Cannon thundered, banners waved, and the whole immense crowd seemed inspired with one feeling of hope and brotherly love and enthusiasm. In the evening there were fêtes in different parts of Paris. Brilliant lights lit up the place of the Bastille, and gay crowds danced where once the gloomy fortress had stood.

Difficulties of the Revolution.—Unfortunately a new Constitution could not at once bring prosperity and good government. What was needed was a strong hand to keep order ; but the ministers were feeble and useless. Necker, from whom so much had been hoped, had shown himself quite unable to bring back order into the finances, and the government was more hopelessly in debt than ever. Lafayette, as commander-in-chief of the National Guards, was perhaps the most powerful man in France, but he was not one who could lead in troubled times. He was vain, and loved popularity, and he liked to be seen and admired by every one as he rode on his white horse through the

streets of Paris. The one man who really understood the needs of the moment was Mirabeau. He saw that, if the country was to be prosperous, order must be kept, and that, though it was well that privileges had been done away with, and rights of self-government given to the people, yet the power of the king, as centre of the government, must be maintained. Secretly he sent his plans to the court, and hoped to get the king and the ministers to follow his advice. Louis himself was too feeble to take any lead; Marie Antoinette really managed everything. Unfortunately she could never bring herself to trust Mirabeau, partly because of his former wild life, and partly because she hoped that, with the help of foreign troops, it would still be possible to bring back the old state of things, and destroy the work of the Revolution.

Meanwhile disorder grew. The peasants, who had learnt the delights of plundering the rich, could not settle down to steady work again. The soldiers, since they were told that all men were equal, would not obey their officers, and there were constant mutinies.

The Clubs.—In the towns men who had the same opinions formed themselves into clubs to discuss the questions of the day. In Paris the clubs grew in numbers and had a great deal of influence. The chief amongst them met in a convent dedicated to St. James, and was on that account called the Jacobin Club. The Jacobins discussed everything freely, and criticised the doings of the National Assembly. Another important club was called the Cordeliers, also after the old convent where it met. In the discussions at these clubs most violent and bitter things were said; no one was safe from their attacks. Many newspapers were

published, which were even more bitter. One of them, called *The Friend of the People*, was written by a man named Marat. He had a very sour and suspicious mind, and in his paper he warned the people of Paris to suspect everybody and trust no one. Everywhere people were excited, restless, and suspicious, and there was no one to bring peace and security.

Death of Mirabeau, 1791.—The Jacobins, who had clubs all over the country as well as in Paris, believed and taught that the King was the destroyer of order, and aimed at setting up a republic in France. Mirabeau still wished to keep the monarchy, but the court would not listen to the plans by which he hoped to save the king. Though his health was very bad, he still strove, both in the Assembly and elsewhere, to convince men that his views were right. In an almost dying state he made his last speech in the Assembly. Four days after, he died; and on the last day of his life he said, ‘I carry with me the ruins of the monarchy.’

The Queen prepares for Flight. — Marie Antoinette, who would not listen to the plans of Mirabeau, was meanwhile making plans of her own. Many of the nobles had fled from France, and were busy in trying to find means to help the king. The other princes in Europe looked upon his cause as their own, for they feared lest the example of the French should stir up their own subjects to rise against them. They therefore agreed with the French nobles—the Emigrants, as they were called—to get an army together on the frontier to be ready to enter France as soon as the signal should be given. At Nancy, near the frontier, there were some French troops under the command of

General Bouillé, a firm friend of the court. His advice was that the king and queen should escape from Paris and join him, and that he would take them to the army which the emigrants were gathering. Then Louis XVI. would be able to return at the head of an army, and make himself the real king of the country, when all the friends of the monarchy would gather to help him. People had for some time heard rumours of the intended flight of the royal family ; and when in early spring the king wished to go and spend Easter at St. Cloud, only a few miles from Paris, his carriages were stopped by the National Guard, and he was forced to return to Paris.

Flight to Varennes, 1791.—Still, it would not have been difficult for them to escape, had they been content to travel in a simple way. But royal people in those days could not move without much fuss and preparation. The queen had to have new travelling dresses made, and a special new coach had to be bought for the journey. The Marquis of Bouillé was ordered to send troops to protect the road along which the royal party were to travel.

It was on the night of June 20th that the king and his sister, the queen and her two children, with their governess, secretly left the Tuileries. Outside Paris the great yellow travelling coach was waiting for them. It got on slowly through the mud, and reached each place later than had been expected. The presence of the troops on the road had already excited the suspicion of the inhabitants, and the royal party did not behave carefully enough. At one place, whilst they were changing horses, the king showed his face at the window, and was recognised by the postmaster, who rode after the royal party, and overtook them at

Varennes, the next stopping-place, whilst they were still looking for horses. He roused the mayor; and a barrier of waggons and barrels was arranged to block the bridge over a river, which the coach must cross. When, in the darkness of the night, the royal coach reached the bridge, it was stopped, and the travellers were told to get out and wait in a grocer's shop till the morning.



MARIE ANTOINETTE FORCED TO DESCEND FROM HER CARRIAGE.

The King returns to Paris.—The queen implored the mayor's wife to let them go on their way; but in vain, though the woman expressed sympathy with her. Alarm-bells brought thousands of National Guards to Varennes, and the king was obliged to return to Paris really as a prisoner. The royal carriage passed through the streets of Paris in the presence of a silent crowd. The walls had been placarded with notices: 'Whoever shall applaud the king will be beaten; whoever shall insult the king will be hung.'

Intense excitement had been caused in Paris by the flight of the king. A petition asking for the deposition of the king was placed on the altar in the Champ de Mars. Crowds gathered to sign it; but Lafayette and Bailly, the mayor, ordered the crowd to disperse, and

when they would not, fired on them, killing several men, women, and children. The republican party spoke of this as the massacre of the Champ de Mars. It helped to bring about a separation between those who were satisfied with the Constitution drawn up by the Assembly and the democratic, or republican, party, which would not be content without the entire overthrow of the monarchy.

The king was now again made to swear to obey the Constitution, but he was treated very much as a prisoner. In the autumn the Assembly broke up. It had formed the new Constitution, which was the work for which it had been called together; and in accordance with that Constitution a new assembly was now elected, which was called the Legislative Assembly.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE TERROR

The Girondins.—In the new Legislative Assembly, which met in October 1791, there were several different parties. The most powerful party was formed by the Girondins, so called because their leaders all came from the department of the Gironde. They were fine speakers, and full of ideas as to what the country needed. They were not satisfied with the Constitution, for they did not wish that there should be a king at all, but hoped to set up a republic. On the whole, they disliked violent measures, and preferred to try and persuade rather than to force men to follow their ideas.

The Emigrants.—Meanwhile the emigrants were busy gathering together at Coblenz an army, which was to be commanded by Louis XVI.'s brothers. The Assembly thought it was time to take some steps against them; and they passed a resolution that the lands of all emigrants who did not return before a fixed date should be forfeited. They also declared that all priests who did not take an oath to be true to the Constitution, should lose their places. Then the Assembly grew bolder, and made the king write to the

foreign princes and say that France would look upon as enemies all those who suffered preparations for war against France to be made in their lands. When Austria refused to withdraw the troops which had been sent to the frontier, the Assembly, in April 1792, decided to declare war.

Beginning of the War.—France was in no condition to carry on war. The army was not in order, the fortresses were out of repair. The king was distrusted; for it was well known that he must in his heart wish success to those who were looked upon as the enemies of France. Besides, it was believed, and with truth, that he and the queen were in communication with the emigrants. To please the Assembly he had chosen ministers from among the Girondins. But the Girondins did not go far enough in their wish for change, and were not violent enough in their language, to please the other republicans, or democrats, as those men were called, who taught that one man was as good as another. The Jacobins especially distrusted the Girondins. The leaders at the Jacobin Club were Robespierre and Marat. Robespierre was a speaker who knew how to convince men; he was well educated, led a moral life, always affected to be the one really virtuous man, and taught his followers to distrust all people in power. Marat, by his newspaper, had always taught men to suspect one another. Under the influence of these leaders, the common people grew very suspicious of the middle classes, the respectable citizens, who had been the first makers of the revolution and wished to uphold the Constitution. Not only in Paris, but all over the country, the same divisions raged, and each man distrusted his neighbour.

The war began on the Northern frontier. The French army was without discipline, and the soldiers fled at the approach of the enemy, crying out that they were betrayed by their generals. The Prussians then joined the Austrians in making war on the French ; and soldiers were gathered at a large camp at Coblenz, under the Duke of Brunswick, to invade France.

The People break into the Tuileries.—The people of Paris were filled with alarm and fury. They suspected the king to be the cause of all their troubles, especially as he had dismissed his Girondist ministers. On the 20th June an immense mass of the populace, men, women, and children, many of them armed, broke into the Tuileries. They crowded round the king, who stood alone and quite calm in a window ; the queen could not reach her husband, but sat in another room behind a table with the Dauphin, and had to bear in silence the rude looks and words of the mob. For four hours this misery lasted, whilst streams of people passed through the rooms of the palace, but no harm was done to the king and queen. The Mayor of Paris and the other authorities did nothing to stop this disorder, which showed the court how little they could trust in them. The queen's only hope was in the foreign army which was collecting on the frontier. To oppose it the French had but few and untried soldiers. The Assembly, therefore, proclaimed that the country was in danger, and bade volunteers come from all parts of France to a camp which was to be formed near Paris. A manifesto made by the Prussian general, the Duke of Brunswick, in which he bade all the country submit to Louis, added to the fury of the Parisians. The Jacobins wished the Assembly to depose Louis, but

the majority refused. Then the Parisians determined to act themselves. Volunteers were arriving from all parts of France every day, and many of these sympathised with the Parisians, and were kept in Paris to help them. Chief amongst these were a band of men from Marseilles, who marched into Paris singing a song, called from them the *Marseillaise*, which has since become the chief French patriotic song. The Commune of Paris, that is, the body of men chosen to govern the city, decided that now, as people were so excited and discontented, it would be a good time to attack the Tuileries, where the king was living, and thus bring about the end of the monarchy. Lafayette, who had lost the favour of the people, had fled from France, but the new commander of the National Guards in Paris knew of their intentions, and prepared to defend the palace, but he was murdered. On the 10th of August the attack began. The king had a guard of 650 Swiss soldiers and some gentlemen; but it was clear that it would be impossible for them to defend the palace against the vast mob which raged outside. The king and queen, with their children, thought it best to fly. They crossed the garden and entered the hall where the Assembly was sitting. For safety they were hidden in a reporter's room, about twelve feet square, behind the president's chair, and stayed there for forty-eight hours.

From his hiding-place the king heard shots fired by the faithful Swiss, who were trying to defend the palace, and wrote word to them to lay down their arms and retire. The unhappy Swiss tried to obey his commands; but as they were escaping across the garden, they were set upon and almost all massacred. The

mob meanwhile stormed into the palace, killing all they met on their way, even the hall-porters and the cooks, plundering or destroying all things they could lay their hands upon, and at last setting fire to the palace.

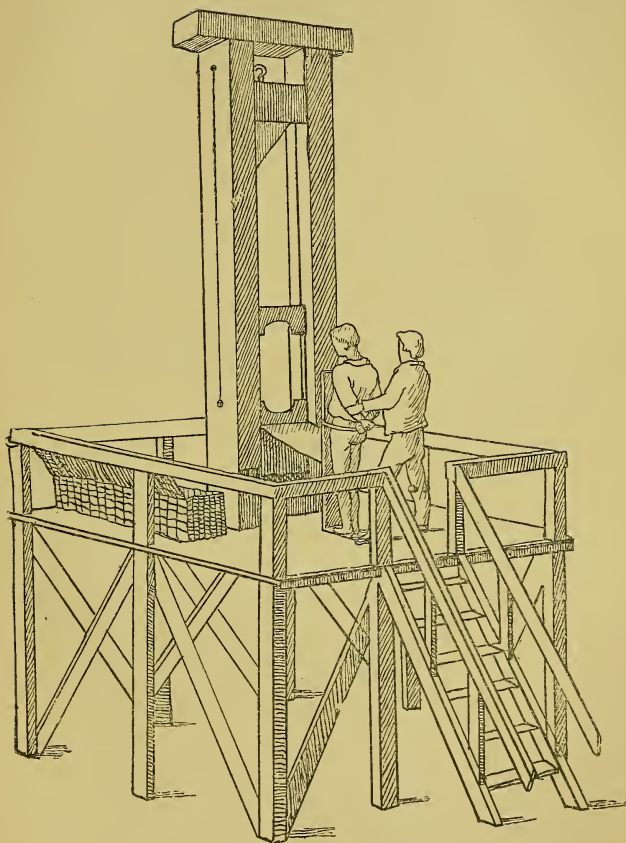
Crowds forced their way into the Assembly, asking that Louis should be deposed ; and a decree was passed ordering that a new assembly, called a National Convention, should be elected to decide the fate of the king and give France a new government. The Constitution, which had been framed with so much trouble, no longer satisfied the people, since it still allowed the existence of a king, and the people were determined to have a republic. The royal family were sent to a prison called the Temple.

Massacres in the Prisons.—One of the revolutionary leaders, named Danton, who was the chief speaker in the Cordelier Club, felt that immediate steps must be taken to prevent the army of the emigrants and the allies from marching on Paris to free the king. He was a man who believed that very stern measures were needed if there was to be order in France. He persuaded the Assembly to declare that the country was in danger, that troops must be raised to keep out the enemy, and that at the same time steps must be taken to destroy the traitors at home. Orders were given to search all the houses in Paris for arms and for suspected persons. Every house was entered, hundreds of people were arrested, chiefly nobles and those who were in favour of the Constitution. Then a few men who belonged to the Commune of Paris hired bands of assassins, who, on September 2nd, visited the prisons and massacred nearly all those whom they found there.

These massacres went on for five days and nights ; only few people took part in them, but the rest seemed too terrified to interfere. The Commune of Paris showed in this way, what would be the fate of those who would not agree with it.

The National Convention.—On the 21st of September the National Convention met. Without any discussion, it decided that the monarchy should be abolished and a republic set up ; but after this was done, there was little agreement in the Convention. The two leading parties were the Girondists, who were moderate republicans, and the party called the Mountain, because they sat on the topmost benches. They consisted of the leading Jacobins and Cordeliers, such as Robespierre and Danton, and had very violent opinions. Besides these two strong parties there were a mass of members who were ready to vote with the party which showed itself the stronger, and they were scornfully called the Frogs of the Marsh.

The Mountain proposed that Louis XVI. should be executed, and none dared oppose, lest they should be considered the friends of royalty. When the royal family had first been taken to the Temple prison, they had been allowed to live together and have a garden to walk in ; but after some weeks it was discovered that plans of escape were being made, and the king was separated from his family and shut up alone. Now he was brought out to be tried before the Convention. They condemned him to death as an enemy of his country. He heard with calm courage that he was to die. A last and sad interview with his family was granted him, and then he was left to prepare for death with his confessor.



THE GUILLOTINE.

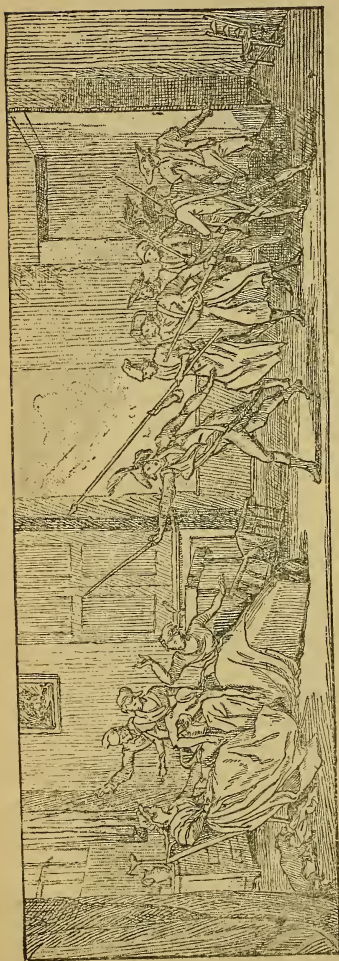
Execution of Louis XVI., 1793.—On a dismal rainy day Louis was driven quickly to the place of execution. He was to have his head cut off by the guillotine, a machine invented not long before by a Doctor Guillotin, after whom it was named. His hands were tied, and he was bidden to climb the steep steps which led to the platform where the guillotine stood. ‘Son of St. Louis,’ his confessor cried with a loud voice, ‘go up to heaven!’ Louis tried to say a few last words to the people, but drums struck up to hide his voice, and he calmly resigned himself to die. He had not had the wisdom needed in those troubled times, but he had tried to do his best. He died really for the mistakes and crimes of the kings who had gone before him.

The Terror.—The death of Louis XVI. added to the enemies of France. The powers of Europe all felt that they must punish a nation which had executed its king. England, Spain, and Portugal joined the allies. In France itself there were risings against the Convention, and its armies had to be sent into some of the provinces as well as against foreign enemies. To meet these evils it was felt that a strong government was needed. The men of the Mountain showed the most decision, and succeeded in having two bodies formed, called the Committee of Public Safety and the Committee of General Security, which should have power to manage the war and to punish all enemies of the republic. To make the government strong these committees decided that men must be frightened, so that they might not dare to resist. The months that followed are called the Terror. The prisons were filled with all persons whom any one chose to accuse of ideas hostile to the government. The

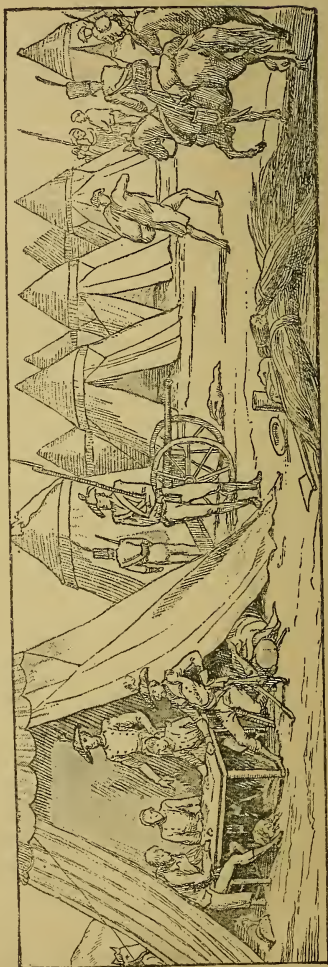
leading Girondists were turned out of the Convention. Some of them escaped from Paris, but most were caught and thrown into prison. The friends of the royal family, the friends of the Girondists, were seized and imprisoned. A court was set up, called the Revolutionary Tribunal, to judge persons suspected of not being friendly to the Revolution. Day after day the unhappy prisoners were fetched out to be tried, and condemned to die by the guillotine. At first there was something like a real trial; even then about sixty persons a month were condemned to death. Later on little time was wasted on trials, and whole batches of prisoners were condemned at once. The guillotine stood always ready in the square called the Place de la Revolution. People called it the holy guillotine, and made hymns to it. Women wore brooches in the shape of tiny guillotines, and children had toy guillotines to play with.

Life in the Prisons.—In the prisons were gathered many of the best educated and highest born people of France, often crowded together in the most filthy rooms. They tried to put away thoughts of death, and spent their time in inventing and playing games, and in talk and discussion as if they were in the brilliant *salons* of the time of Louis xv. None knew who would next be called out to die, but all were ready to meet their fate with courage.

Murder of Marat.—You will remember that Marat had done more than any other revolutionist to make people distrust one another. Many of the Girondins thought that his teaching was one of the chief causes of the horrors of the Terror. A young and accomplished woman, Charlotte Corday, who was



MURDER OF MARAT.



GENERAL HOCHÉ SIGNING THE PACIFICATION OF LA VENDEE.

living in Caen, heard some of the Girondins, who had fled from Paris, talk of the evil influence of Marat. She thought it would be a noble deed to free the country from such a man. She went to Paris and wrote to Marat begging him to see her, as she had important secrets to tell him. He admitted her into his rooms one evening, whilst he was sitting in a bath, which he had to take for the good of his health. He began to write down what she told him, and whilst he was busied in this way, she stabbed him in the throat, and he died on the spot. Charlotte Corday did not attempt to escape; she was put into prison, and soon after executed. Her crime did more harm than good to her friends, for it was thought that the Girondins had planned Marat's death, and they were pursued with more bitterness than before.

Execution of Marie Antoinette, 16th October 1793.—After the execution of Louis XVI. Marie Antoinette had been left alone in the Temple, as her children had been taken from her. Some attempts to help her to escape made the Committee of General Security decide to bring her to trial. She was spoken of as the 'Widow Capet.' She was of course condemned to death, and was carried to execution on a common cart with her hands tied behind her. Suffering had turned her hair white before her time, and all her beauty was gone. She met death with a noble courage, which has made men forgive her errors.

The Terror in the Provinces.—In the provinces the Terror reigned as in Paris. In many towns revolutionary tribunals were set up, and deputies from the Convention went to see that suspected persons

were tried at them. Thousands of people of all ages and ranks, women as well as men, perished. At Nantes the condemned persons were tied together on rafts and drowned in the Loire. Men seemed to rejoice in the bloody work, and spoke of the duty and glory of feeding the guillotine. The worship of the Catholic religion was forbidden, for the leaders of the Convention did not believe in the Church, the names of the months were changed, and the years were divided according to a new plan into weeks of ten days. The year 1 was said to begin on September 22nd, 1792, the day on which the republic was proclaimed.

The Success of the War.—The government, which made itself strong in such an awful way, carried on with energy the war against the combined nations of Europe. The armies were entirely re-formed, and the danger of the country filled the soldiers with patriotic zeal. In the republican army any man could rise to be an officer or a general, and merit was quickly rewarded. This was very different from the old state of things, when all the officers had to be nobles by birth. Before long several famous generals arose, who not only drove back the enemies who were invading France, but conquered the Netherlands and made the Rhine the border of France.

The Rising in La Vendée.—The armies of the republic had to fight also against rebels at home. The chief rising in favour of the monarchy and the Catholic religion was in the province called La Vendée; it was marshy and wooded country, and the peasants were able to hold out for a long while against the soldiers, but were at last put down and put to death without mercy by General Hoche, one of the bravest soldiers of the

republic. In Brittany also the peasants rose, and formed themselves into bands which troubled the soldiers very much. They were called 'Chouans,' and as they knew every corner of the country, they could hide in the deep wooded lanes and thickets, and attack the soldiers when they were least expected.

Last days of the Terror.—After a while some of the very men who had helped to set up the Terror grew tired of its horrors, and said that the time was come to show mercy. Chief amongst these were Danton and Camille Desmoulins, leaders of the Mountain ; but Robespierre and his friend St. Just were all-powerful on the Committee of Public Safety, and still wished the bloody work to go on, that they might force men to obedience through terror. They were able to bring to execution first the chief members of the Commune of Paris, then Danton and Camille Desmoulins, and after them their wives. Thus the very men who had helped to set up the Terror perished in it.

Robespierre seemed now to stand alone and to have everything his own way. The executions were continued with terrible rapidity. Some of those who helped to bring others to death seem to have loved the terrible work, others did it because they feared that otherwise they would be victims themselves. Robespierre and St. Just persuaded themselves that, when they had killed all those whom they suspected, they would be able to set up a government which would make France happy and prosperous.

Execution of Robespierre, July 1794.—But

the moment came when men refused to submit to Robespierre any longer. No one felt safe from him, so all the different parties combined to oppose him. They attacked him in the Convention, and after violent debates, which lasted many hours, he was arrested. In a struggle he had his jaw broken with a pistol-shot; and in this miserable state he was executed, and with him St. Just and his chief followers.

With the death of Robespierre and his followers the Terror ceased. People breathed freely, and demanded the release of their friends and relations who were still imprisoned. It is believed that, during the fourteen months which the Terror lasted, 16,000 were sentenced to death and executed throughout France.

The end of the Terror could not bring peace to France. The country was torn by different parties. The royalists once more hoped that it might be possible to restore the monarchy, the violent revolutionists wished to bring back the Terror. The Convention drew up a new Constitution, which they hoped would make France a strong and moderate republic, and then separated in 1795.

The Work of the Convention.—Whilst party disputes had raged, and innocent men and women had perished on the scaffold, the Convention had done much useful work for France. It had set up schools and museums throughout the country. In Paris it had started the splendid collections of the Museum of the Louvre. It had re-organised the army, and put order into the laws. The old France had been swept away with

terrible bloodshed ; but many noble-minded men worked hard to build up a new France, where all men might be educated, and have a chance of leading happy, orderly lives. The first thing that was needed was a government strong enough to bring order into the land. Then men would be able to enjoy the new blessings which had been won for them.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE RISE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

The Directory.—In the new Constitution, the executive power, that is, the power to see that the laws were carried out, was given to five men called Directors. The first Directors had a difficult work to do. In France they had to keep down both the royalist party and the revolutionary party. At the same time, war had to be carried on against Austria and England, who had not made peace with the republic. The country was in a miserable condition; there was no money; commerce and industry seemed at an end. The armies were in need of pay, of food, and of clothes; but they were made up of splendid soldiers, and commanded by brave and clever generals.

Napoleon Bonaparte.—The minister who directed the war chose a young officer, named Napoleon Bonaparte, who had already distinguished himself on several occasions, to command the army which was to invade Italy, and fight the Austrians there. Bonaparte was a native of the island of Corsica. He was only twenty-seven years old, and the distinguished generals in the army of Italy were not pleased at having to submit to so young a man. But when he had explained his plans to them, one of them remarked, ‘We have found our

master.' To the soldiers Bonaparte addressed a proclamation which filled them with zeal; he said to them: 'Soldiers, you are badly fed and almost naked. The government owes you much, but can pay you nothing. I will lead you into the most fertile plains in the world—there you will find honour, glory, and riches. Soldiers of Italy, will you be wanting in courage?'

The Campaign of Italy, 1797.—In Italy Bonaparte won a succession of brilliant victories. The Italians welcomed him as a deliverer; for they hated the rule of the Austrians, and Bonaparte said that he would give them freedom. He entered Milan amidst the rejoicings of the inhabitants, who put up triumphal arches of flowers in his honour. The Austrians made great efforts to drive the French from Italy. The royal princesses and the ladies of the court showed their enthusiasm by embroidering banners for the new regiments which were raised. But the new regiments were beaten as well as the old; and the Austrians were at last obliged to ask for peace, which was signed at Campo Formio in 1797. The Emperor had to give up the Netherlands and Milan, and submit to having republics set up in Italy, instead of the States ruled by princes which Bonaparte had found there.

The Expedition to Egypt, 1798.—Bonaparte returned to France covered with glory. The Directory were afraid of his presence, and bade him lead an army to invade England. But this seemed to Bonaparte too great a risk. He asked instead to lead an army to conquer Egypt, saying, 'It is only in the East that great things can be done.'

There was an English fleet, under the famous Admiral

Nelson, in the Mediterranean. But no one knew where Bonaparte was going to take his army, and he succeeded in avoiding Nelson. He landed safely in Egypt, and had soon conquered the whole land. But meanwhile Nelson arrived with his fleet, and completely destroyed the French fleet in the battle of the Nile. Bonaparte and his army were thus shut up as prisoners in the land which they had conquered. He proceeded to invade Syria, where he was at first successful, but failed to take Acre, which was defended by the English Admiral, Sidney Smith. Of him Bonaparte used often to say afterwards, 'That man made me miss my fortune.' He was obliged to go back into Egypt. There he learnt that people in Europe looked upon him and his army as lost; that the English Prime Minister, Pitt, had persuaded Austria and Russia to make another coalition with England against France; that the French armies had been defeated; and that France was in danger of invasion.

At once he decided to return. He left the command of the army in Egypt to General Kléber, and with a single frigate returned to France.

The Consulate, 1799-1804.—Bonaparte had left his army without permission, but the government was too weak to find fault with him. The people had been dazzled by the story of his victories in Egypt, and received him with enthusiasm. The Directory was surrounded by enemies, and had little real power; it could not resist Bonaparte. He succeeded in changing the government. When the council would not hear him he brought in his soldiers, who drove away the deputies. He decided that, instead of the Directory, three Consuls should rule France, with the help of

several assemblies, of which the chief was called the Senate. But he himself was the first or chief Consul, and really the sole ruler. So we see that the work of the Revolution had brought such disorder, that the only real power left was in the army, and that the man whom the army trusted and adored was the master of France. People were so tired of changes and disturbance that they were glad to submit to a strong ruler, who soon showed that he could manage the affairs of the country as well as he could lead an army.

The Plébiscite, 1799.—When Bonaparte had settled the government of France, he determined to make it clear that the people were pleased with what he had done. Every man in France was to be asked for his opinion, and this way of finding out the will of the people is called, taking a plébiscite. Three millions of the French people said that they approved of what Bonaparte had done, and only about 1500 dared to say that they disapproved.

The Battle of Marengo, 1800.—As soon as matters were settled at home, Bonaparte suddenly and secretly led an army over the Alps into Italy. He crossed by the St. Bernard pass, leading his troops through most difficult and dangerous paths. In the worst places, the bands played to cheer the soldiers. The Austrians had won back Italy, and now gathered a large army to defend it; but in the battle of Marengo, which lasted a whole summer's day, Bonaparte utterly defeated them. The Austrians were forced to ask for peace. But at the same time, the English had entirely defeated the French army left in Egypt, and Bonaparte was obliged to give up the hope

of keeping Egypt. Every one was tired of war, and at last in 1802 peace was signed at Amiens with the English.

The Power of the First Consul.—Bonaparte, the First Consul, as he was called, was now in a glorious position. The borders of France stretched to the Rhine; the Austrian Netherlands had been joined to France. In Holland and Italy republics had been set up in alliance with France. At home the First Consul very quickly brought order into everything. New roads were made, old roads mended, new bridges thrown over the Seine at Paris. Bonaparte encouraged commerce and education; in everything he was determined to be the great ruler of a great nation, and himself to be the first figure everywhere. The emigrants were allowed to return in peace; religious worship was restored in the churches, and arrangements were made with the Pope for the appointment of bishops. The First Consul began to keep a gay court; and to make his position sure, he had himself named Consul for life.

Plots against the First Consul.—The growing power of the First Consul filled the royalist party in France with alarm and despair. There seemed no chance that the Bourbons would be called back to the throne. In their fury they made plots against the life of the First Consul. Bonaparte's police were so sharp that they found out these plots, and those who had taken part in them were severely punished. He wished to frighten his enemies, and he caused the young Duke d'Enghien, a member of the Bourbon family who was living in Germany near Strassburg, to be captured and brought to France. He was tried and condemned to death on the charge of having taken part in the plots

against the First Consul's life. He was shot by night in the ditch of the fortress, so that no effort might be made to get Bonaparte to spare his life.

The other princes of Europe were indignant at this act, and began to make new preparations for war. England persuaded them to join once more in a coalition against France.

Napoleon Bonaparte becomes Emperor, 1804.—Though his power was safe for his lifetime, Bonaparte could not now rest content unless he was allowed to pass it on to his children. He succeeded therefore in having himself named Emperor, as Napoleon I., and once more changed the way in which France was to be governed. As he still wished to appear to rule by the will of the people, a plébiscite was again taken, and the whole people were asked to vote whether he should be Emperor. Once more a large majority voted as he wished. His brothers and sisters were made princes and princesses; and it was decided that, if he left no children, one of his brothers was to succeed him as Emperor.

Court of Napoleon I.—Napoleon wished his court to be as splendid as the court had been in the old days of the monarchy. He tried to get the old nobles to come and take places at the court, but very few of them would. Then he began to make a new nobility by giving grand titles to his brothers, his generals, and his chief followers. The country was so dazzled by his extraordinary cleverness, that he was allowed to do exactly as he liked. His chief generals were to be named marshals. There were fourteen at first, afterwards the number grew to twenty; some of them had titles as dukes and princes besides.

Coronation of Napoleon I.—The Emperor wished all the world to see his grandeur. He asked the Pope, who did not dare to refuse, to come and crown him in France. A magnificent ceremony took place in the Church of Notre Dame in Paris. The Pope anointed Napoleon with oil, but he was not allowed to place the crown on his head, for Napoleon was too proud to let it seem as if even the Pope could give him a crown. He himself placed the crown on his own head, and then crowned his empress, Josephine, whom he had married just before his first war in Italy.

The Camp at Boulogne.—A little while afterwards, Napoleon crossed the Alps, and had himself crowned king of Italy at Milan. His next plan was to invade England with an immense army. Soldiers were gathered in a great camp at Boulogne, and large flat-bottomed boats were built to carry them across. Had this army once landed in England it must have been victorious; but the difficulty was to cross the Channel, as the English navy was so much better than the French. Napoleon made clever plans to protect his troops whilst crossing, but at last he was forced to decide that the risk would be too great. He gave up the invasion of England, and led his army, which was called ‘the Grand Army,’ against Austria. Pitt had once more stirred up the powers of Europe to make war on France, and was helping them with English money.

Capitulation of Ulm, 1805.—Before he left Boulogne, Napoleon had planned how he would conquer the forces of his enemies, and with wonderful speed he carried out his plans. He had great generals, able to

understand his plans, and splendid soldiers ready to follow him anywhere. First, a great Austrian army was so surrounded near Ulm by the French that, almost without fighting, they had to yield themselves prisoners. The French soldiers said with surprise, 'He makes us fight with our legs,'—for they had captured their enemy not by fighting, but by their rapid marches. After this he was able to enter Vienna, and then went quickly on to destroy another army, commanded by the Emperor of Austria himself, and his ally the Emperor of Russia.

Battle of Austerlitz.—A great battle was fought on the snowy plains near Austerlitz in the presence of the three Emperors. The troops of the allies were driven back by the French, and as they fled over some large frozen ponds, Napoleon ordered the cannon to fire on the ice and break it up, so that thousands were drowned as they tried to fly. It was a complete victory for the French. Napoleon was delighted with his soldiers, and said to them, 'When you return to your homes, it will be enough for you to say, "I was at Austerlitz" for men to call you brave soldiers.'

Treaty of Presburg.—The Emperors of Austria and Russia had fled from the battle-field, and the Emperor of Austria hastened to make peace with Napoleon. In three months Napoleon had made himself master of Germany; after this the Emperor of Austria never again claimed any power over the German States, but called himself only Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary. The German States along the Rhine were united under the protection of France into a confederation. Napoleon's desire to use his victories for his own glory led him to give duchies, and even kingdoms, to his brothers and his generals. One

brother, Joseph, was made king of Naples, and another, Louis, king of Holland. There was no longer any pretence of giving freedom to the peoples of Europe.

Battle of Trafalgar.—In the midst of his victories in Germany, news reached Napoleon of the utter defeat of his navy by the English under Nelson, at the battle of Trafalgar. He gave up after this all hopes of victory by sea; but it added to his rage against the English, and he determined to ruin them if he could not beat them. Pitt died just after the battle of Austerlitz, in despair at the state of Europe; and as his great enemy was dead, Napoleon at first hoped that England would make peace. When he found that she would not, he ordered in revenge that all the ports of Europe were to be closed to English ships; that no English goods were to be brought on to the Continent; and that every Englishman found on the Continent of Europe was to be seized as a prisoner of war; thus England was to stand alone against all Europe.

Peace of Tilsitt, 1807.—To carry out this plan entirely, Napoleon had first to force Prussia and Russia to obey his wishes. In the battle of Jena the Prussians were entirely conquered, and the Russians were also defeated in two great battles. Napoleon was so pleased with the fighting of the Russian soldiers, that he wished to have them as allies; and Alexander, the young Emperor of Russia, was full of admiration for his great enemy. The two Emperors met on a raft in the middle of the river Niemen, near Tilsitt, in the presence of their armies. We are told that Alexander threw himself into Napoleon's arms, saying, 'I hate the English as much as you do.' 'If that is so,' answered Napoleon, 'then peace is made.'

The two Emperors had long conferences, in which they behaved like intimate friends, and at last signed the treaty of Tilsitt. By this, some of the lands of Prussia were taken away and made into a kingdom for Napoleon's brother Jerome. England was now left quite alone, and no one on the Continent was allowed to trade with her. This caused great suffering; sugar, coffee, and other things which were usually bought from English merchants, became enormously dear. The English suffered equally through not being able to sell their goods, and people smuggled the things which they might not buy and sell openly.

CHAPTER XXX

THE FALL OF THE FIRST EMPIRE

War in Spain.—Most of the nations of Europe had agreed to Napoleon's plans, and agreed to what was called the continental blockade, which kept English ships out of their ports. But Portugal, which had long been friendly with England, refused to agree, and Napoleon therefore sent an army into Portugal. He next determined to interfere with the government of Spain, where the king and his son were always quarrelling. Napoleon knew how to make use of their quarrels, and at last made the king of Spain give up his crown to him. Joseph Bonaparte, who had been made king of Naples, was now bidden to be king of Spain; whilst Murat, one of Napoleon's great generals, who had married his sister, was sent to be king of Naples instead of Joseph.

Spain did not submit easily. The people rose against the French on every side, and were often successful, as the French soldiers who had been sent to Spain were very young and untrained. An English army under Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterwards the Duke of Wellington, landed in Portugal and drove the French out of that country. When Napoleon heard how badly things were going, he came to Spain himself with part of his

Grand Army, and defeated the Spaniards several times. But though they were conquered in battle, they always rose again. Every peasant was ready to turn himself into a soldier and attack the French when he saw a good chance. In the desolate mountain districts which the French had to cross, they were always being attacked by bands of armed peasants and shepherds, who sprang out upon them in unexpected places, and escaped before they could be caught, by hiding behind rocks, and getting away into the mountains where the soldiers could not follow them. Walled towns were defended with the greatest possible courage. Saragossa was besieged in vain for two months, and even when at last the French got into the town, the Spaniards defended the houses, which had to be taken one by one.

New War with Austria.—Meanwhile Austria, thinking that Napoleon was busy in Spain, attacked the French in Bavaria. Napoleon hastened to the spot, and after winning several battles, once more forced Austria to make peace. Austria had to pay a heavy price for the peace. Napoleon was disappointed because his wife Josephine bore him no children. He now put her away, and asked the Emperor of Austria to give him his daughter, the Archduchess Marie Louise, as wife. The Emperor was obliged to yield. Poor Marie Louise did not like it at all, and all her family looked upon her as a victim. She was never liked in France, and every one was sorry for Josephine, whose grace and gentleness had made her much beloved.

Birth of the King of Rome, 1811.—The next year a son was born to Napoleon, who, from his cradle, was called the king of Rome. It seemed as if the Empire was firmly established, and men hoped that

Napoleon would now be content, and that he would allow Europe to be in peace. France was growing weary of the incessant war, and longed for quiet. But Napoleon could not rest. He was very angry with the Emperor of Russia, who had again allowed English ships to enter his ports, and he decided to lead an army to invade Russia. He was unwise enough to start on this great expedition without settling the affairs of Spain. The Spaniards were constantly revolting against the rule of Joseph, whilst the French generals found it impossible to drive out Wellington. But Napoleon said that after his invasion of Russia everything would be settled and peace secured to Europe.

The Invasion of Russia, 1812.—In 1812 he led his Grand Army to invade Russia. The Russian generals retreated before him without fighting. Their plan was to draw him far into the country, and they burnt everything on the way, so that he might find no supplies for his troops.

Battle of Borodino.—Napoleon longed for the chance of winning a great battle, and thus covering himself again with glory, whilst he struck terror into his enemies. At last the Russians halted to fight at Borodino, in the hopes of saving Moscow. It was a terrible battle; thousands were killed on both sides, and the Russians had to retreat, though their army was not destroyed. They could not keep the French from entering Moscow, the holy town of Russia; but nearly all the inhabitants left the town, and the stores of provisions were destroyed or carried off, so that the French found an empty and desolate city. Some of the Russians who remained set fire to the city in different places. The wooden houses burnt quickly, and the fire

raged for five days. The French could only save the churches and the great fortress, called the Kremlin. Napoleon lingered with his army amongst the ruins of the city, hoping that the Russians would ask for peace ; but they used the time to get their armies again into a fit condition for fighting. At last, after he had been a month in Moscow, the approach of winter warned Napoleon that it was high time to leave so cold and inhospitable a country.

The Retreat from Moscow.—The army left Moscow on the 19th October. The frosts at night soon became severe, and before long the roads were covered with snow. There were no provisions to be found on the road, and the French cavalry had to ride great distances into the country to search for food. Soon after leaving Moscow a terrible battle was fought with the Russians, and though the French were in the end victorious, they lost many men. All along the road they were constantly attacked by bands of Cossacks, the wildest and fiercest of the Russian horse-soldiers. Each day the cold grew more intense, the difficulties of the march increased, and the sufferings of the army were terrible.

The Passage of the Beresina.—When they reached the river Beresina, they found that the Russians had destroyed the bridge by which they hoped to cross the river. The engineers had to build two new bridges, and to do this the workmen were obliged to stand amongst the ice-blocks in the freezing water. Nearly all of them perished of cold or were drowned. At last the bridges were ready, but whilst some of the French army crossed, others had to keep back the Russians, who were pressing on them from all

sides and shooting at the confused mass which struggled to cross the bridges. Twenty-four thousand men perished at the passage of the Beresina. Of the great army of 500,000 men who had entered Russia only 200,000 came out again, and these were utterly disorganised; the regiments were broken up; officers, and even generals, struggled along in rags and on foot like common soldiers.

Napoleon left the army near the frontier of Russia, and hastened to Paris. He had been alarmed by hearing that in his absence a plot had been made against him. He wished himself to tell the people of the ruin of his army, and to take steps at once to raise a new army.

Battle of Leipzig, 1813.—The news of the terrible retreat of the Grand Army gave courage to all Napoleon's enemies. All Germany rose against him. Napoleon called upon the French to save their country, and succeeded in creating a new army. He entered Germany, and once more won victories over his enemies. Peace was proposed, but Napoleon would not agree to give up anything which he had won in his former wars, and preferred to go on fighting. Since it seemed that, wherever Napoleon himself was, his troops were victorious, the allies tried to avoid fighting when he was present, and attacked only the armies of his generals. In October 1813 Napoleon had gathered his forces before Leipzig, and there the united armies of his enemies attacked him. The battle lasted three days. Napoleon had not so many soldiers as his enemies, and at last was forced to retreat. The bridge over which his men had to pass was blown up by mistake before the whole army had crossed, and 20,000 French remained in the power of the enemy.

The Allies prepare to invade France, 1814.—After this terrible battle Napoleon had to retreat to France, and once more the allies offered him peace, if he would be content to leave France with her old boundaries. Again he refused. On all sides the armies of his enemies were preparing to invade France. Wellington had chased the French out of Spain, and was now leading his victorious troops into France. Napoleon was like a lion at bay. When the French found fault with his doings he exclaimed: ‘Is it the time to speak of abuses when 200,000 Cossacks are crossing our borders?’ He attacked first one and then another of his enemies, and defeated them. Then, as their numbers still allowed them to advance, he decided to get behind them, so that they might be shut in between his army and Paris. But Paris was not strong enough to hold out against them. The city was spared the horrors of a siege. The allies entered in peace, and treated the town and its inhabitants with all possible respect.

Napoleon abdicates.—Napoleon was at Fontainebleau, where he still had a good many troops round him, and for a moment he thought of continuing the struggle; but he soon felt that it was hopeless. He gathered his old guards together and bade them farewell, and having given up his crown, he went with a few followers, and about 400 men of the old guard, to the little island of Elba, off the coast of Italy.

The First Restoration.—The Emperor of Russia wished to leave the French people perfectly free to choose the government they would prefer, but the friends of the Bourbons succeeded in bringing back the old royal family. The brother of Louis XVI. was



THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

proclaimed King. He was called Louis XVIII., as the royalists looked upon the little son of Louis XVI. who had died in prison, as Louis XVII. The French people knew nothing about Louis XVIII., who had been spending his exile in England. With him all the nobles who had so long been banished from France came back. They did not behave wisely, and people said of them 'that they had forgotten nothing, and learnt nothing.'

The Hundred Days, 1815.—Napoleon at Elba heard from his friends of the discontent in France. He escaped without difficulty, and landed in France not quite a year after he had left it. As soon as he appeared he was welcomed with enthusiasm. Troops were sent against him, but on seeing him they broke into cries of 'Long live the Emperor!' Without striking a blow he crossed France like a conqueror, and entered Paris the day after Louis XVIII. had fled from it. He at once set to work to get an army together.

Battle of Waterloo.—In fifty days Napoleon was ready to march against the allies. He wished to attack them before they could enter France. The Prussians under Blücher, and the English under Wellington, had arranged to meet near Brussels. Napoleon wished to fight before they had time to unite. On the 16th of June a terrible battle was fought against Blücher, who was beaten, but his army was not destroyed. Wellington was at a ball in Brussels on the evening of June 17th, when he heard of Napoleon's approach. He quickly made his preparations, and drew up his men next morning on the plains of Waterloo. It was the first time that he and Napoleon met face to face. Blücher had promised to come to help Wellington. Napoleon knew

this, and hoped to drive the English from their position before the Prussians could arrive. At half-past eleven the attack began, and all through the day the English drove back the charges of Napoleon's troops.

It was evening before Blücher arrived ; a heavy rain had fallen the night before and made the roads almost impassable. At the sight of his army advancing on their right, the French felt that all was lost, but Napoleon would not give up, and ordered his Guards to make one last charge. It was in vain, they were driven back and turned in flight. Napoleon himself was forced by his generals to flee. When he reached Paris, he found that no one was ready to stand by him, and he was forced again to abdicate. He was afraid lest he should be given up to the enemy, and went to the coast in the hope of finding a ship to take him to America ; but he found all the ports guarded. At last he gave himself up to the English fleet, and wrote a letter to the Prince Regent of England, in which he said that he wished to live in peace in England. The European powers decided that it was not safe to let him live in Europe, and he was sent to the little island of St. Helena off the coast of Africa. There it was impossible to escape, and after six years he died.

He was one of the greatest generals and one of the most extraordinary men there has ever been. Unfortunately he lived too much for his own glory, and behaved as if the world was made for him ; and so his great powers were not so useful as they might have been. But he did much useful work in making good laws for France, and everywhere in Europe he carried a new sense of liberty and equality amongst men. If he had not tried to do so much, and had been more peaceful, he would not have made so many enemies, and would have left France more safe and more settled.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ATTEMPT TO RESTORE THE MONARCHY

The Second Restoration.—After Napoleon's flight Wellington and Blücher entered Paris. Louis XVIII. was once more placed on the throne, and returned to Paris a hundred days after he had left it. A conference of the powers of Europe met in Paris, and after several months settled the terms of peace. France had to give up all the lands which had been won in the wars of the republic and of Napoleon. The pictures and statues which Napoleon had carried off from the Italian museums were given back, and France had to pay large sums of money to the allies for the cost of the war.

Louis XVIII. came sadly back to Paris. He knew that he could not be welcome to the French, since he owed his power to foreign arms. He gave the people a charter which set up two assemblies, the Chamber of Nobles and the Chamber of Deputies, with whose help he was to govern the country. France was no longer to be a monarchy where the king could do just as he liked, as it had been in the days of Louis XIV., but a constitutional monarchy like England. Many of the nobles who came back to France after long years of hardship and exile, did not like the new state of

things, and wanted to get back their old rights and privileges, and to punish those who had driven them out. Fortunately Louis XVIII. was too wise to listen to them altogether. Still he allowed many of the friends of Napoleon to be imprisoned and put to death. Then he settled down to try and rule quietly, and treat all the parties in the country with justice. France was torn by different parties; first one, then the other, tried to get the upper hand. As Louis XVIII. grew older he was inclined to be specially friendly to the extreme royalists. The priests had a great deal of influence over him, and tried to force the country to follow their views, so that the Roman Catholic religion might again become as powerful as it had formerly been.

Charles X. comes to the Throne, 1824.—When Louis XVIII. died he was succeeded by his brother, Charles X. It was soon clear that Charles X. had learnt nothing by his long exile; his one wish was to go back to the old state of things before the Revolution. He disliked the Chamber of Deputies because it opposed his views, and he began to plan how he could change the government and give the Chamber less power. He was very friendly with the priests, and was always ready to listen to their advice, and to help them to make the Roman Catholic religion supreme.

The Conquest of Algiers, 1830.—In the year 1830 the French were led into a war with the ruler of Algiers, a country on the north coast of Africa. They were victorious, and Algiers became a French possession. Charles X. hoped that this success would make his government popular. He dissolved the Chamber and ordered new elections, thinking that men friendly to him would be chosen. But deputies were elected

who nearly all belonged to the Liberal party, as the party opposed to the king was called.

Then Charles X. determined, by his own will alone, to make some important changes in the government. He drew up and signed five ordinances, which stated the changes he was going to make, so that more power might belong to the king and less freedom to the people.

The Revolution of 1830.—Paris was filled with excitement by this, and the liberal leaders at once roused the people to arms. They threw barricades across the street, made of carts and furniture and anything the people could lay hands on, and tied together with chains. These barricades were defended by armed men, and made it very difficult for the soldiers to move along the streets. Charles X. thought it would be easy to put down this revolution; but his troops could do nothing, and some of them went over to the other side.

Some of the liberals proposed that they should send for the Duke of Orleans and make him king. He was the son of that Duke of Orleans who is known as Philippe Egalité and had been executed in the Terror, and was descended from the younger brother of Louis XIV. The fighting in the streets of Paris lasted for three days, and then Charles X. abdicated in favour of his grandson, the Duke of Bordeaux, and fled to England. The Chamber would not have the Duke of Bordeaux, but chose the Duke of Orleans, and he became king as Louis Philippe.

Louis Philippe, 1830.—Louis Philippe was willing to rule according to the will of the Chamber. He was a good man, and had always been friendly with the liberal party. But he had many difficulties to con-

tend against. There were three different parties opposed to him: the Legitimists, who thought that the Duke of Bordeaux, whom they called Henry v., and who is also known as the Count of Chambord, should be king; the Republicans, who wished for a republic; and the Napoleonists, who wished to bring back Napoleon's son as emperor.

Government of Louis Philippe.—Sometimes these disputes led to actual fighting, but Louis Philippe managed to put down his opponents, and for some years ruled peacefully. One of his ministers, Guizot, did much to help on the education of the people. In many places there were no schools at all, and people did not think it necessary that girls should be taught anything. Schools were now set up everywhere, so that all, even the poorest, might be taught if they wished.

As order at home was restored, France again began to take part in the affairs of Europe. The great object of the king and his ministers was to keep at peace with foreign powers, so as to give the country rest.

Conspiracy of Fieschi, 1835.—The violence of some of the republicans did a great deal of harm to their cause. One day, as the king with his sons and several of his generals was riding to a review, an infernal machine, placed by a Corsican revolutionist named Fieschi, burst. The king was not hurt, but one of the generals was killed, and forty of the people standing about to see the king pass were killed or wounded. Fieschi himself was wounded by the bursting of his own machine. He was taken and executed. This crime obliged the government to use more severe means to keep the revolutionists in order.

Louis Napoleon, 1836.—Napoleon's son died in 1832, and the head of the Bonaparte family was then Louis Napoleon, son of Napoleon's brother Louis. He was discontented with his obscure position, and looked upon himself as the heir to the great Emperor's glory. He made an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the soldiers at Strassburg to rise in his favour. He was taken prisoner, but the government decided not to make a martyr of him by keeping him in prison, and allowed him to go to America.

Some years afterwards he made another attempt, and landed in France from England, where he had been living. He seemed to think that it would be easy to persuade the soldiers to follow him; but he was again arrested, and this time he was sentenced to be imprisoned for life in the fortress of Ham.

The Political Banquets, 1847.—The friends of Louis Philippe began to hope that the Orleanist family was firmly established on the throne. But one day as the king's son, the Duke of Orleans, was out driving, his horse ran away. He jumped out of the carriage, and was so much hurt that he died four hours afterwards. The heir to the throne was now the Duke of Orleans's son, a boy of four; and as Louis Philippe was already seventy, it seemed likely that he would not live until his grandson was old enough to reign. With a child for a king, it would be more difficult than ever to keep down all the parties which opposed the throne.

Hard winters and bad harvests helped to make France poor and discontented. People began to complain loudly of the government, and to ask for changes. It was said that the Chamber of Deputies did not

properly represent the people, and that the way in which it was elected must be reformed. The reformers wished to make their cause popular. They went about France holding banquets in different towns, at some of which as many as a thousand guests were present. At the banquets speeches were made, in which the grievances of the people and the need for reforms were dwelt upon. At one of these banquets, Lamartine, one of the chief leaders of the reformers, even went so far as to say that the monarchy must fall.

At last it was decided to hold a large banquet in Paris, since the Government would not grant the reforms which were asked for. The government was alarmed at the idea, and said that the banquet must not be held. The reformers did not wish to come to an open struggle with the government, and after some hesitation they decided that the government should be obeyed, but they said that time would show the justice of their cause.

The Revolution of February 1848.—When it was known that the ministers had forbidden the banquet, excited crowds began to gather in the streets and to throw up barricades and arm themselves. No energy was shown by the government in trying to put down the revolution. When at last the National Guards were called out they made friends with the mob. The king lost heart; he thought that all France was against him, and he decided to abdicate in favour of his grandson, the Count of Paris. The old king, who was now aged seventy-five, with his queen, quietly walked to a cab and drove away from Paris.

The Provisional Government.—Then his daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans, leading her

two little sons by the hand, walked to the Chamber of Deputies. No one dared to proclaim the little Count of Paris king. The mob swarmed into the Chamber, and the place was filled with confusion and violence, from which the Duchess escaped with difficulty. Lamartine then made himself heard, and proposed that a number of men whom he named should make a provisional government, who were to rule till a Constituent Assembly could be elected. Lamartine himself was the leading member of this provisional government. It was very difficult to keep order in Paris; it seemed as if the worst days of the first Revolution were going to be repeated. The streets were full of barricades, and wild crowds raged round the public buildings. Lamartine had great influence with the people, and often was able to quiet them with his eloquent words. The provisional government decided that every man who was of age might vote for the Constituent Assembly. Nine hundred members were elected, for the most part moderate men. They set to work once more to fix upon a form of government for France. There was no longer to be a king, but a republic, with a president at its head who was to be chosen by the votes of all the people.

The Death of the Archbishop of Paris.—Paris was in a very disturbed state, the streets were full of idle men ready to make a disturbance, and when the government tried to make order, there was a general rising of the working men of Paris. It was determined to put them down with firmness. Then again barricades were thrown up and fighting began in the streets of Paris. The Archbishop of Paris went in solemn state to the greatest of the barricades, to urge

the people to submit. Whilst he was talking to them he was struck by a chance ball, and fell a martyr to the cause of peace. At last, after four days' fighting in which many thousands perished, the rising was put down. This rising had frightened the respectable people and made them anxious for a government which could keep order.

Louis Napoleon elected President.—The next thing to be done was to elect a president for the republic. The Constitution had decided that every Frenchman was to vote in the election of the president. The choice lay between five people. One of these was Louis Napoleon, who had escaped two years before from the fortress in which he had been imprisoned. The great mass of the peasants were in his favour; they remembered the glory of his uncle, since their fathers and many of themselves had served in his armies. Louis Napoleon promised to favour every kind of reform if he were elected, and said again and again that he would not use the office of president for his own personal glory. He was elected by an enormous majority, and swore when he entered his office to remain faithful to the republic.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE SECOND EMPIRE AND ITS FALL

Louis Napoleon as President, 1848-1852.—Louis Napoleon was not a great man. It was to the magic of his name entirely that he owed his election. He had no idea of being true to the promises that he had made. His one object was to prepare the way for his own rise to power. The position of President, in which he had entirely to submit to the will of the Chamber, by no means satisfied him.

He began to keep a brilliant court, and to give important posts to his friends and relations. He travelled through France and reminded people by his words of the great deeds of his uncle.

The Coup d'État, 1851.—At last, in December 1851, everything was ready for a plot called the *coup d'état*, by which Louis Napoleon was to make his power sure. Only a few men were in the secret, but amongst them was the head of the police, who was quite willing to do as he was told.

In the night the streets were filled with troops. The police seized nearly a hundred of the chief leaders of the republican party. In the morning, bills posted in the streets, told the people that the Assembly was

dissolved, and that the President wished the people to help him to make a new Constitution. The few people who tried to rise against him were put down at once. A few barricades were raised in the streets of Paris, but they were immediately stormed, and many innocent people were shot. All over France the leading republicans were arrested. Some were imprisoned, and some were exiled. Then Louis Napoleon drew up a new form of government, according to which he was to be President for ten years. Before a year was over he had himself proclaimed Emperor, as Napoleon III. He called himself the successor of the son of the great Napoleon, who had died in Austria some years before.

Napoleon III., 1852.—None of the foreign powers were inclined to interfere with Napoleon, and one after another recognised him as Emperor; but few of the most distinguished Frenchmen would have anything to do with the empire. The children of the men who had risen under the great Napoleon came to his court, where any one was welcome. He married a beautiful and clever Spanish lady, the Empress Eugénie, who did much to make the empire popular.

The Crimean War, 1854.—Napoleon III.'s power rested chiefly on the army, and he was eager for a war in which the soldiers could distinguish themselves. Russia was at that time planning to drive the Turks out of Turkey and seize Constantinople. Many people in England were afraid lest, if Russia held Constantinople, she might interfere with the English road to India. The English Government therefore agreed to join with Napoleon III., and help the Turks to keep back the Russians. Napoleon III. wished for the war to strengthen his power, since, as the ally of

England, he would be recognised as one of the princes of Europe. Thus the strange sight was seen of two Christian nations joining together to help the Turks, whom the Christians of former ages had tried so hard to keep out of Europe.

The Peace of Paris, 1856.—The French fought well in the Crimea, and won special glory at the siege of Sebastopol, which ended the war. The Russians were obliged to sign the treaty of Paris in 1856. This war added greatly to the power of Napoleon III. He paid a visit to the English court, and was visited in turn by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort. A son was born to him, who was baptized with great pomp in Notre Dame. He wished to dazzle the French by a great show of magnificence. The old streets in Paris were pulled down, and new streets, with splendid houses, built. Boulevards—wide streets planted with trees—followed the lines of the walls of the old city. The Emperor seemed to wish to destroy the memories of old France.

The Italian War, 1859.—After the fall of Napoleon I. great part of Italy had again been given over to the Austrians. The Italians longed to drive out the Austrians and unite Italy under one rule. One of the chief Italian princes was Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia. He had at this time a great minister, Cavour, whose aim was to free Italy from the rule of foreigners. He succeeded in persuading Napoleon III. to help Victor Emmanuel to make war against Austria. The French troops crossed the Alps, and with the help of Victor Emmanuel, who was himself a great general, defeated the Austrians at the battles of Magenta and Solferino. All the Italians who

loved liberty joined to help Victor Emmanuel; chief amongst them was the famous leader, Garibaldi. The end of the war was that nearly all Italy united under the rule of King Victor Emmanuel; only Rome remained to the Pope and Venice to Austria. Napoleon III., in return for his help, was given the district of Nice and the province of Savoy.

War between Prussia and Austria, 1866.—Italy could not rest whilst Venice still belonged to Austria. Victor Emmanuel made an alliance with the king of Prussia, the German prince next in importance to the Emperor of Austria. In 1866 Italy and Prussia together made war on Austria. In this war Prussia was victorious, and became the real head of Germany, and was able to make Austria give up Venice to Italy.

France declares War against Prussia, 1870.—France watched with jealousy the growth of the power of Prussia, and people began to see that sooner or later war must break out between the two countries. Napoleon III. was not afraid of war. He thought that his army was in a splendid condition, and that a victorious war would make him stronger to resist the republican party, who grew each year more impatient at his rule.

A trifle served as an excuse, and in 1870, Ollivier, Napoleon's chief minister, declared war against Prussia and her German allies. He himself said at the time that he did it with a light heart.

Battle of Sedan.—Every one thought that the French would win, and great was the surprise when almost from the first the Prussians were victorious. They had splendid generals—Moltke, the Crown Prince Frederick, and others; and they had well-trained troops,

able to bear great fatigue. The French army was really in bad order, and had poor generals. In one battle after another the French were defeated. At last, at the battle of Sedan, only six weeks after the war had been declared, the chief French army was entirely surrounded by Moltke. Napoleon III. and all his army had to give themselves up as prisoners into the hands of the Germans.

The Republic is proclaimed in Paris.—When the news of the battle of Sedan reached Paris, the people at once declared that Napoleon should be no longer Emperor, and proclaimed the republic. A provisional government was formed, called the Government of the National Defence. Gambetta was the hero of this government; he was the minister of war, and he did all in his power to rouse the courage of the people. But the German armies entered France, and were able to march on Paris and besiege it. For four months Paris was closely shut up by the German army. No one could go in or out. Letters were sent by carrier-pigeons; and one or two people, Gambetta amongst others, managed to enter or leave the besieged city in balloons. The people suffered terribly from cold and hunger, and were forced to eat even rats and mice; but they held out bravely until, on the 31st January 1871, Paris had to capitulate, and give itself up into the hands of the Germans.

The King of Prussia becomes Emperor of Germany, 1871.—It was whilst besieging Paris that the king of Prussia, who was lodging in the Palace of Versailles, took the title of German Emperor. After Paris had fallen, the great German minister Bismarck agreed that all fighting should cease for three weeks,

whilst the French elected an Assembly. The Assembly met at Bordeaux, and a new government was chosen, of which M. Thiers was the head. He was forced to agree to make peace with Germany, and to give up to the German Emperor the province of Alsace and part of Lorraine, with the town of Metz, all of which had been won by Louis XIV. The French also had to pay an immense sum of money to the Germans.

The Commune.—As soon as the Germans had left Paris, the Assembly came and settled at Versailles. But Paris was not inclined to obey the Assembly. The citizens chose a number of men called the Commune to govern Paris. For some time Paris was given up to disorder. It was only after severe fighting that the Communists could be put down and order restored. The Archbishop of Paris was killed by the Communists, and the Tuileries and other public buildings were burnt down.

The New Constitution, 1875.—Some people now hoped to bring back the old monarchy, but after many discussions a new Constitution was at last agreed upon, and passed by the Assembly in 1875. This Constitution set up republican government, which still lasts. France is governed by a Chamber of Deputies, called the National Assembly, which is very like our English Parliament. Every Frenchman has a right to vote in the election of the deputies. There is a second Chamber, like our House of Lords, called the Senate. Some of its members are chosen by the country, and some by the National Assembly. Both Chambers combine to elect the President, who is chosen for seven years, and then gives up his post and a new President is chosen. There are ministers who

carry on the government of the country, and who have to rule in such a way as to please the National Assembly. If the Assembly is not satisfied with the ministers, the President must send them away and choose new ones.

Since the war with Germany, France has been at peace, and the prosperity of the country has grown steadily. The people are industrious and thrifty. The enormous sum of money demanded by Germany at the peace has been paid off. Much has been done to improve the condition of the country. Roads and railways have been made, public buildings built, new schools started. Unfortunately the republic has not on the whole been friendly to religion, and the Church has therefore been in opposition to the government.

The French cannot submit patiently to see Alsace and Lorraine in the hands of Germany, and in the hopes of winning them back some day, keep up large armies; every Frenchman has to serve one or more years in the army. Germany also keeps up enormous armies so as to be ready for war, and these large armies make Europe like an armed camp, and give rise to constant fear lest there should be another great war.

Napoleon III. took refuge in England, where he died in 1873. His only son joined the English army, and was killed whilst fighting in the Zulu war at the Cape. The Empress Eugénie still lives in England.

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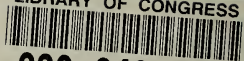
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